

**AFTER THE DUST SETTLES:
THE ROLE OF THE US MILITARY IN RECONSTRUCTION OPERATIONS**

**BY
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APPROVAL

The undersigned certify that this thesis meets master's-level standards of research, argumentation, and expression.

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DISCLAIMER

The conclusions and opinions expressed in this document are those of the author. They do not reflect the official position of the US Government, Department of Defense, the United States Air Force, or Air University.



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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the US military's role in reconstruction operations and proposes a better approach than that currently being executed. It compares and assesses US reconstruction efforts following the American Civil War, World War II in Japan, and the Iraq War. These studies reveal several factors that relate to operational success and failure. Focus upon these factors can improve the success rate of US-led reconstruction efforts in the future.



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Introduction

There is no escaping our obligations: our moral obligations as a wise leader and good neighbor in the interdependent community of free nations – our economic obligations as the wealthiest people in a world of largely poor people, as a nation no longer dependent upon the loans from abroad that one helped us develop our own economy – and our political obligations as the single largest counter to the adversaries of freedom.¹

President John F. Kennedy

You do it ultimately in your own interest. You try to do it quickly. The quicker you do it, the quicker you restore a sense of normalcy to a society and get it back in their hands, the more likely you are to survive the criticism you get, and the more likely you are to see a better environment.²

US Secretary of State Colin Powell

The United States has not performed reconstruction operations well recently. For example, occupation and reconstruction forces were in Iraq for almost nine years and failed to achieve success. Within only a few years of withdrawing US forces, Iraq plummeted into widespread sectarian violence, teetering on the brink of civil war, and is now struggling to defeat an existential threat in the form of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. The time and resources utilized by the United States during reconstruction operations seem to have had little effect on enduring security and stability in Iraq. Since both Iraq and Afghanistan reconstruction operations are arguably a failure, is there a better approach for organizing US reconstruction operations and if so, what should the military role or roles be within it?

If history is any reliable indicator of the future, then war, occupation, and reconstruction are all extremely likely to occur again in the future, regardless of the United States or anyone else's disdain for them. It is in this vein that this thesis attempts to find a better approach to US-led reconstruction operations.

¹ John F. Kennedy, United States President, "Special Message to the Congress on Foreign Aid," written correspondence, March 22, 1961.

² Powell, Colin, "A Conversation with Colin Powell," *The Atlantic*, 18 April, 2007. Interview with David Samuel in which Powell describes his view on how to execute US intervention and reconstruction.

The United States has not always failed at conducting reconstruction operations. For instance, after only five years into the occupation of Japan, the United States was able to confidently shift the majority of reconstruction forces in support of the Korean War. This confidence was validated when the Japanese were granted full independence less than two years later. It appears that time and resources utilized by the United States during reconstruction operations in Japan were successful in developing conditions for sustained peace and did not go to waste.

A Better Approach to Reconstruction

With the United States currently serving as the lead planner and executor of most international intervention and reconstruction, the answer to finding a better approach lies in understanding and analyzing past and current US-led operations. Experience provides both successful and unsuccessful models for reconstruction. During the American Civil War hasty policy, reactive strategy, and disorganization induced a perfect storm of confusion that likely contributed to Reconstruction failure. In Japan, the near opposite conditions of unified policy, focused strategy, and organizational harmony occurred that prospectively contributed to successful reconstruction.

This thesis analyzes evidence from the three case studies of US reconstruction operations following the Civil War, Japan, and Iraq through the lens of the three processes of policy, strategy, and organization. Analysis derives several common factors and trends of successful reconstruction that allow probable conclusions to be drawn about the future conduct of operations. Ultimately, unification and integration of the three processes of policy, strategy, and organization can provide flexible implementation and success to occur.

Additionally, specific analysis of military performance during reconstruction in these cases reveals what the military role or roles in operations should likely be. In the cases studied, the military played a vital role in accomplishing many of the policy and strategy objectives and tasks. Upon analyzing the Civil War, Japan, and Iraq reconstruction operations, there appears to be sufficient evidence from the comparison of military performance to infer a relationship to the outcomes of success and failure.

During Civil War Reconstruction, the military played a vital role in many aspects of operations. However, significant, politically induced shortages of manpower combined with a disjointed command structure and legal constraints prevented the military from being able to effectively conduct reconstruction operations. The lack in military capability to oversee and enforce Reconstruction helped enable the development of insurgent entities that eventually relegated the South back to near antebellum status quo and failure.

Conversely, the story of military reconstruction operations in Japan is a story of success. The military was afforded wide latitude and authority, as well as significantly more resourcing. The combination of an integrated, unified organization and command structure fostered an increased capability to conduct reconstruction planning and execution effectively. The resultant ability to oversee and enforce policy due to these factors suggests a recipe for success and possible clarification of the role of the military in reconstruction operations.

Scope of the Thesis

As with any study, this thesis has limitations and suggests avenues for further research. This thesis focuses only on US-led operations, as the United States is currently and historically the most likely state to lead and conduct reconstruction abroad. The research is whole-of-nation in scope, concentrating on large-scale reconstruction operations and not humanitarian aid and disaster relief or limited conflicts.

It is also important to note the inherent bounds of the two universes of variables in reconstruction success and failure: those of the occupied and the occupier. The occupied variables consist of what is commonly referred to as the human terrain; unique culture, receptivity to intervention, and the willingness to embrace defeat and accept change. This universe of variables plays a significant role in determining the outcome of occupation, evidenced by the challenge an unreceptive attitude posed during Civil War reconstruction and the advantage provided by a receptive one during the occupation of Japan. However, the underlying perceptions, beliefs, and ideology held by the occupied host nation population, while relevant to reconstruction planning and execution, are

ultimately out of the occupier's physical control, residing in the realm of individual cognition.³

Therefore, this thesis focuses on occupier variables. Occupiers can make better use of resources by attempting to exert influence over those variables within immediate grasp, such as the processes, factors, and trends associated with successful reconstruction operations. Policy, Strategy, and organization are all manageable variables, as well as vital components of planning and execution success. This thesis chooses to focus on these latter variables of the occupier in order to identify the most significant factors and trends in an attempt to reach a conclusion that suggests a better approach to reconstruction operations.

Defining Reconstruction

Reconstruction is a very broad term. For the purposes of this thesis, reconstruction encompasses much, such as regime change, nation-building, state-building, and peace-building. By simple definition, reconstruction is the “reorganization and reestablishment” of something.⁴ In the case of the United States, it is currently an official function of the Department of State, but maybe there is an alternative in light of the large and sustained role the Department of Defense has played. Is there a better approach for organizing US reconstruction operations and if so, what should the military role or roles be within it?

Synthesis of these factors and trends offers lessons that have withstood the test of time and are still relevant and applicable. Results in Japan indicate that there may be a better approach to current US reconstruction operations and that the US military plays a key role in achieving enduring success.

³ David Edelstein, “Occupational Hazards,” *Military Review*, Jan-Feb 2009. In his article, Edelstein makes a detailed argument for the influence of occupied variables during occupation and reconstruction operations.

⁴ *Meriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary: Eleventh Edition* (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2003), 1040.

Chapter 1

American Civil War

Ironically, even perversely, by 1877 both North and South could proclaim success. How and why the North lost so many of the fruits of victory is a complex story in which the Army played a central role.¹

April 9, 1865 marked the end of the American Civil War and the start of what some expected to be a quick transition to re-unification and prosperity.² However, the assassination of President Lincoln five days later served as a foreshadowing of the struggle to come.

Reconstruction technically began a few years earlier than the end of the war as Union military governors were appointed to administer newly occupied southern territories as early as 1862. With the issuance of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and ensuing Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction in 1863, an official, organized reconstruction effort began. Two years of conflict already caused many on both sides to lose the appetite for war, particularly in the South where Yeomen bore the brunt of Confederate conscription and casualties. Tired of "fighting for a planter-dominated confederacy," the growing class divide wrought more than 100,000 deserters, forming a silver lining around the hope for a speedy peace and re-unification.³ By war's end, the environment was ripe with eagerness for economic and social reform, as well as a willing desire to engage in a "partnership with their Yankee *protectors*."⁴

Unfortunately, over the next fifteen years, policy, strategy, and organization of reconstruction shifted dramatically several times. The military role was hindered by willy nilly changes and interference. The resultant disjointedness in guidance and implementation made conditions for success elusive, if not impossible, to obtain.

¹ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 240.

² Millett, *For the Common Defense*, 257.

³ Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: 1863-1877* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1988), 13-15.

⁴ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 14.

Hasty Policy

Reconstruction began with good intentions, but under the direction of Vice President turned President Andrew Johnson following the death of Lincoln, there was a significant policy change for the worse.

Johnson, who had been appointed as Tennessee's military governor by Lincoln in 1862 immediately prior to his election as Vice President, had a "national reputation for Radicalism" and pursuing great changes. As governor, he had removed "Nashville's mayor and city council for refusing to take an oath of allegiance," arrested a Confederate leaning judge, and in bypassing elections achieved "nearly unanimous approval" to adopt a state "constitutional amendment to abolish slavery."⁵ His election to Vice President by Republicans in 1864 "symbolized the party's determination to reward Southern Unionists" as part of a greater effort to extend Republicanism into the South.⁶ However, Johnson was much more moderate than his Congressional counterparts knew. He was more sympathetic to the plight of the "poor whites," who he believed had been dragged unwillingly into rebellion by slaveholders, than to the slaves themselves, remarking "Damn the Negroes, I am fighting those traitorous aristocrats, their masters."⁷ His policies ended up being much more moderate than Lincoln, creating furor within the Republican Congress, and setting Reconstruction on a path to failure President Ulysses Grant was ultimately unable to reverse.

In an almost complete role reversal from his tenure as governor, President Johnson "imposed no severe penalties on the South" in an effort to expedite state restoration, allowing "unrepentant Southerners" to be elected to office.⁸ His lenient Presidential Reconstruction exploited the 10 Percent Plan without strict enforcement of the required oaths of allegiance to the Union or prohibition of former "high-ranking Confederate leaders" to hold office.⁹ This policy enabled the election of "Unionist"

⁵ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 43-4.

⁶ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 44.

⁷ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 44.

⁸ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 257-258.

⁹ Marc Greene, *Deconstructing Afghanistan* (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University Press, 2015), 22. The 10 Percent Plan was a decree enacted by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863 which decreed a state could be reunify with the Union if 10 percent of a state's voters had pledged an oath of allegiance to the Union, as well as the Emancipation Proclamation.

governors with “unprecedented patronage powers,” beholden to “traditional” Southern values with a belief emancipation did not imply “civil equality or the vote.”¹⁰ The former Confederate regime now had a strong foothold in Southern governance, using state’s rights to re-institute ex-confederate soldiers into militias, pass “black codes” to restrict the freedman’s civil rights and suffrage, and gain enormous momentum in negating many of the gains made by reconstruction thus far. Although the Radical Republican-controlled Congress was able to over-ride President Johnson’s vetoes and pass Reconstruction Acts to allow for equal protection under the law, irreparable damage had already been done to any hope of a smooth, quick, and acceptable transition.

When President Grant won office in 1869 he faced an uphill battle to regain control and set policy to get Reconstruction back on track in the South. At age 46, he was the youngest President ever elected in US history and as post-war Commander of the Army had had his attention split between reconstruction and the American Indian Wars. His publically known distaste for the motives and actions surrounding Johnson’s impeachment, as well as his significant military reputation, won him the Republican nomination. He was in favor of Congress’ Radical Reconstruction plan which “divided the South into five military districts, each commanded by a general.”¹¹ Although the military had complete immunity and “control over the civil governments,” authority had been transferred back to most of the states, Democrat or Republican, by 1871.¹² Once again, policy change had re-delegated power and planning for reconstruction. The establishment of the Freedman’s Bureau had helped support black rights and the Union League helped mobilize black voters after ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment, but both became targets of bigotry after the transfer of power back to the local civilian governments. To counter threats of voter intimidation, Congress authorized Unionist militias, intensifying discontent by having armed black men policing and using them as an excuse to reduce the federal military presence.¹³ In both instances, Congress made policy decisions more divisive than inclusive.

¹⁰ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 188-189.

¹¹ Millett, *For the Common Defense*, 259.

¹² Millett, *For the Common Defense*, 259.

¹³ Millett, *For the Common Defense*, 260.

Congress had lit a match to the powder keg and opposition in the South acted accordingly, rebelling covertly instead of overtly to combat Radical Republican policy. Newly elected, Confederate-sympathizing representatives had been democratically installed and wrested power away from the military governors, ignoring and often conspiring with newfound terrorist groups to commit intimidation and even assassination.¹⁴ Groups such as the Klu Klux Klan, White League, and Red Shirts were well-armed and organized, conducting “a calculated insurrection” to “redeem” all states still under Republican control.¹⁵ Congress had tied its own hands by allowing such swift change in power with little ability for oversight or enforcement. Not only was the federal military power restricted by “constitutional and legal safeguards,” but they were “too small to quash the violence.”¹⁶ Even with the passage of Enforcement Acts, permitting President Grant to “declare martial law and suspend the writ of habeas corpus” it was too little too late and largely unenforceable due to federal military downsizing.¹⁷

By the election of 1877, there was little appetite left for reconstruction. Congress had lost most of the leverage it once had by aiding the conversion of a Southern “congressional delegation that was 90% white Republican in 1866” to one which was “four-fifths white Democrat by 1874.”¹⁸ Public and congressional support to send more federal troops was almost non-existent and the depression of the 1870s “rudely shattered whatever hope still existed for the early emergence of a modernized, prosperous Southern economy.”¹⁹ Commitment to any promises Lincoln had made all but disappeared with bargaining leading up to the Presidential election. Congress begrudgingly accepted the ideology of “separate but equal” and conceded the fact the South had returned almost entirely to “status quo antebellum” in order to secure Rutherford B. “Hayes’s inauguration” and avoid more conflict.²⁰ From start to finish, hasty and insufficiently planned policy implementation precluded Reconstruction from being successful.

¹⁴ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 260.

¹⁵ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 261.

¹⁶ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 260.

¹⁷ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 261.

¹⁸ Greene, *Deconstructing Afghanistan*, 23.

¹⁹ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 535.

²⁰ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 581.

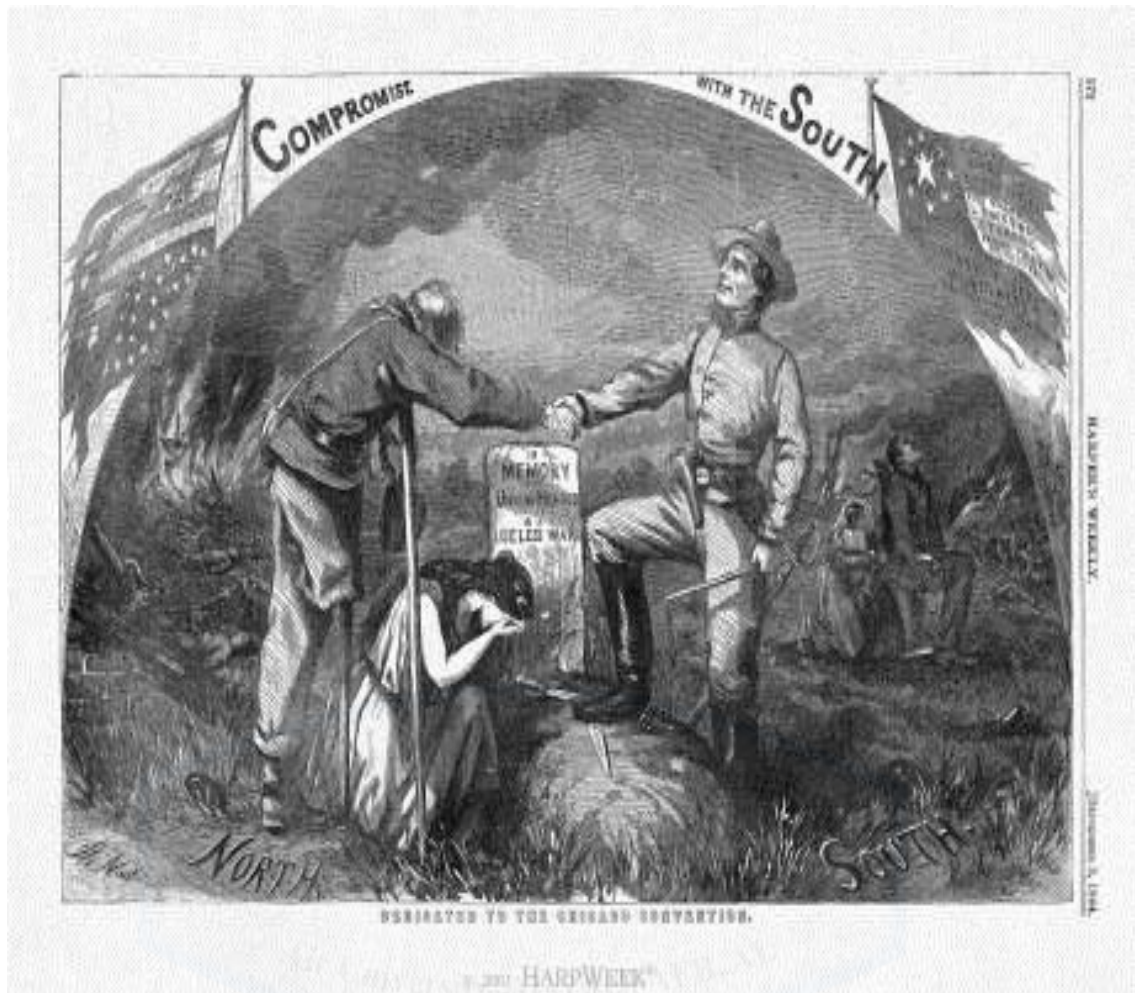


Figure 1: Comprisse with the South

Source: HarpWeek.com, 2009, "Comprisse with the South," <http://www.harpweek.com/09Cartoon/BrowseByDateCartoon.asp?Month=September&Date=3>.

Reactive Strategy

Reconstruction strategy was bound by policy and as such changed just as fluidly. Initially, Lincoln and Johnson both aimed to transition power back to local states as rapidly as possible, instituting hasty, and often porous, measures. When it became apparent a strategy for a speedy transition was having dubious and unacceptable outcomes, radicalism was adopted to impose change. When radicalism ultimately failed due to a lack of commitment and enforcement capability, appeasement was the only option remaining. All three strategies involved little planning and foresight, changing from proactive under Lincoln, to reactive for most of the remainder of reconstruction.

As an opening bid to attain a quick recovery and resolution to reconstruction, Lincoln was proactive and signed the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction as a precursor to the end of war. Coupled with the Emancipation Proclamation, he had set the conditions and expectations for progress. Both Lincoln and Johnson recognized the transition to life with freedmen eased for whites if they did not directly force suffrage or equality on them in the language of the proclamations.²¹ In their eyes, the abolition of slavery was a hard enough pill to swallow for most and also falsely assumed “blacks, if enfranchised, voted with their former owners” and inhibit the ability of Yeomen to “bring to power ‘a new class of politicians from the plain people’.”²² Both Presidents believed the working class was the key to real change in the South and an indirect, softer approach better swayed the Yeomanry tide towards reformation. As a contingency and counter to expected resistance, Congress established the Freedmen’s Bureau within the War Department to assist with the transition of former slaves to freedom.²³ Additionally, Presidents and Congress alike believed the mere presence of the military was enough to ensure peace and stability. Such wide-eyed ambition was as noble as it was naïve, assuming too much risk too soon and underestimating the opposition.

As a result of this overly-optimistic and simplistic approach, Southerners who were initially “prepared to acquiesce” to demands instead took advantage of the gaping weakness in oversight and planning.²⁴ Lincoln and Johnson’s strategic miscalculation sealed the “fate of many blacks and their white political allies,” leading to a battlefield’s worth of slain freedmen and Unionists who were “shot, stabbed, hanged, drowned, mutilated beyond description, tortured beyond conception,” and outright murdered.²⁵ In response, Congress turned towards a more radical strategy, seeking to impose change onto the South.

Johnson had muddied the waters of reconstruction by acting to appease rather than demand. Southerners were relieved by the mildness of his terms, emboldening “defiant talk of state rights and resistance to black suffrage” which were unthinkable just months earlier. The defeatist mindset and willingness to accept change were quickly

²¹ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 36.

²² Foner, *Reconstruction*, 186-189.

²³ Greene, *Deconstructing Afghanistan*, 11.

²⁴ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 189.

²⁵ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 257.

being converted to a desire to renew and restore Southern pride and the previous way of life. Grant and the Radical Republicans' strategy to levy social justice and security with the military quickly lost momentum upon the realization they did not have enough manpower to subdue such an extensive and large organization of "lawless terrorists."²⁶ Even if facing a smaller insurgency, providing security was a difficult task given such small numbers of federal troops and a slave population comprising approximately half of the Deep South, one-third of the Middle South, and one-eighth of the Border South.²⁷ Grant had underestimated the will of a Southern culture which had generationally ingrained slavery into society so much it transcended class divides "with a commitment to white supremacy."²⁸ The Reconstruction and Enforcement acts passed by Congress to empower radical action by the military lacked credible commitment. The reduction of federal troops, economic strife, and loss of popular support doomed the Radical Reconstruction strategy to failure.

Upon recognition of two failed strategies, Grant and the Republicans conceded loss and embarked on an appeasement strategy to salvage some semblance of victory. The great compromise of 1877 allowed the New South whites to impose "informal servitude on blacks" without fear of reprisal.²⁹ Radicalism and appeasement were both reactionary strategies. Radicalism was a reaction to violent opposition to change, attempting to enact large, complex social change by force without the planning or resources necessary to overcome generationally formed beliefs and values. Appeasement was a reaction to the defeat of radicalism by Democratic Redemption and simply sought peace and stability. It was acceptance of the reality the North "had won the conventional war, but lost the unconventional war." However, after so much bloodshed and so many unfulfilled promises, "the peace lacked justice."³⁰

Disorganization and Impatience

The organization and structure of reconstruction followed suit with an inconsistent and loose policy and strategy. During all stages of change, there was little

²⁶ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 260.

²⁷ Greene, *Deconstructing Afghanistan*, 8.

²⁸ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 12.

²⁹ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 262.

³⁰ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 262.

prudence in planning. The result was a disorganized effort lacking the sustainable structure required for such large scale reconstruction.

Throughout reconstruction, the President, Congress, and military rarely coordinated or shared a common agreed upon policy or strategy. Additionally, there was no single, centralized decision making authority and each agency regularly and purposefully undermined the others when there was disagreement. As a consequence, “lawlessness, insurgency, and reconciliation coincided chronologically with Presidential Reconstruction, Radical Reconstruction, and Democratic Redemption.”³¹

Under Presidential Reconstruction military governors who were appointed “with civil and military powers for occupied states” were forced to cede power back to local control under the false guise of Union allegiance. The “South’s old elite” were pardoned by Johnson himself in many cases because he expected they used “their political influence in favor of the administration,” but it quickly became clear they had no intention to reform their ways.³² The President continually acted without the consent or consultation of Congress in an effort to hastily transition power back to local control. While Johnson was well intentioned in his vision, he lacked proper planning and coordination, often ignoring Congress and neglecting the military. With the military legally restrained on the sidelines and lawlessness running rampant, the Congress decided to take action into their own hands by overriding Presidential vetoes and organizing a “Congress-Army alliance” to conduct reconstruction.³³

Radical Reconstruction aligned control back to military governors. “The Command of the Army Act and the Tenure of Office Act” ensured leadership remained intact and enhanced “authority over the entire Army.”³⁴ Reconstruction Acts gave the military full legal jurisdiction by reinstating martial law and a logical, coordinated structure of five military districts to operate through. The military had picked up where it had left off prior to Presidential Reconstruction by attempting to develop “loyal

³¹ Greene, *Deconstructing Afghanistan*, 35.

³² Foner, *Reconstruction*, 182.

³³ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 259.

³⁴ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 259.

governments in the seceded states and working out the freedmen's place in society."³⁵ For a brief period reconstruction organization flourished. The top military commander was elected President in 1869, working in concert with Congress and the military to accomplish corresponding goals. However, Northerners had grown weary of six years of reconstruction, believing "martial law and the military's role in the South" should have been over in 1865.³⁶ Reconstruction had already been too long and costly in Congresses view, the military was fatigued, and Grant wanted to see re-unification occur during his Presidency. With concurrence by all agencies, an organized effort established local Unionist militias, downsized the federal military, and "readmitted most of the states" to the Union, returning rule back to an ill-prepared and in many cases, ill-conceived civil government.³⁷ An undermanned and decentralized military quickly found themselves fighting an overwhelmingly large insurgency. Yet, there was little desire to deploy more troops and possibly begin another war, so reconciliation in the wake of Democratic Redemption became the Northern path to peace, tainted by haste.

Disorganization had led to chaos during Presidential Reconstruction. Lack of rule of law allowed terrorists to intimidate and murder with impunity. Radical Reconstruction fixed many of the problems which had been created by its predecessor and formed a unified organization, structure, and effort between the President, Congress, and military. Significant gains in political, education, labor programs for ex-slaves were made, but unfortunately a lack of patience and popular support dismantled the best chance the South had for successful reconstruction.

An Untraditional Military Role

The military played a vital, but untraditional role in Southern reconstruction. Military government "assumed responsibility for far more than its conventional security role," performing missions it was often ill-equipped to conduct.³⁸ Dramatic force reduction coupled with inconsistent policy, strategy, and organizational changes made an already difficult task nearly impossible.

³⁵ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 257.

³⁶ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 257.

³⁷ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 259.

³⁸ Greene, *Deconstructing Afghanistan*, 43.

During Presidential Reconstruction, the military lost the physical scope and legal prerogative to enforce order. Immediate post-war military strength in the South was close to one million, but had dropped to only 38,000 by 1866.³⁹ In conjunction with such a drastic loss of manpower, legal power had shifted from military to civil government under President Johnson's plan to swiftly restore state and national unification. The military was virtually helpless to maintain security, much less oversee the Freedmen's Bureau and economic, legal, and political affairs of former slaves,"⁴⁰ with which they had been tasked. The situation quickly began to unravel and disenfranchised Southerners showed their contempt for Union troops with frequent insults, assaults, and "scores of damage suits in state courts."⁴¹ Under these conditions the military could do little more than watch as violent opposition to reconstruction erupted.

Under Radical Reconstruction, the military regained legal control for a short time, but a growing insurgency made physical security an impossibility with manning down to only 8,038 in 1871. It was clear the Indian Wars and national interests in the west combined with a loss in popular support of reconstruction had made military manning in the South expendable.⁴² Even with a sound strategy and organization, the military lacked resources adequate for the scope and scale of such a large mission.

The military had performed to the best of their ability, but were never given the forces necessary to conduct reconstruction. In addition, military intervention was relegated to being only episodic given strict legal mandates imposed by an ever-growing Southern government unsympathetic to Reconstruction aims. Moreover, the distraction of western expansion and responsibility for so many non-military missions overwhelmed the disproportionately small number of troops on the ground.⁴³ It became clear the military's civilian masters did not understand the commitment of time and military capability required for successful reconstruction. The token Union force present during Southern Reconstruction was spread too thin and lacked the domestic expertise to ever truly be effective.

³⁹ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 148.

⁴⁰ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 257.

⁴¹ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 258.

⁴² Foner, *Reconstruction*, 148.

⁴³ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 148.

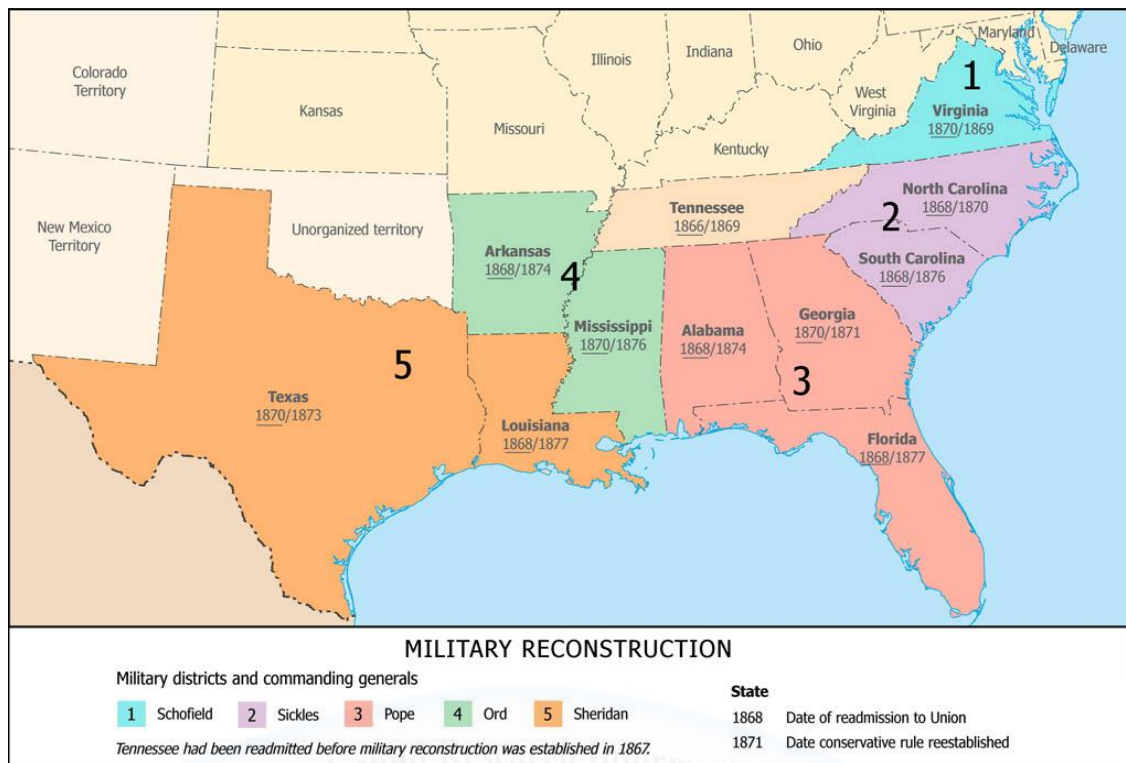


Figure 2: Military Reconstruction Districts (5)

Source: Learn NC, a program of the University of North Carolina, School of Education, 2009, “Military Reconstruction,” <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/multimedia/12980>.

Conclusion

Reconstruction spanned four presidencies, all with different agendas. After fifteen years of effort, the South remained relatively unchanged. Inconsistent policy, strategy, and organization significantly reduced, if not eliminated entirely, the chance of achieving utopian Reconstruction of “a society purged of all racial distinctions.”⁴⁴ An undermanned and legally constrained military was rendered ineffective for oversight and enforcement of Reconstruction.

Some portend the outcome could have been favorable had Radical Reconstruction taken place earlier, in “the immediate aftermath of defeat” when a “considerable number” of Southerners were “prepared to acquiesce” to Northern demands of suffrage and equality.⁴⁵ Others herald had economic depression not occurred in the 1870s and the

⁴⁴ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 288.

⁴⁵ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 189.

“volume of business remained unbroken,” the carpetbaggers and scalawags may have “retained power indefinitely.”⁴⁶ However, such bold assertions likely only proved true if there was a sound policy, strategy, and organization in place to support a secure and stable environment for reconstruction.

The election of President Hayes in 1877 marked the end of reconstruction in the South until the federal government intervened again to enforce the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Blacks had to endure almost one hundred more years of suffering and discrimination as second class citizens in the South under Jim Crow laws. Ultimately, the failure of reconstruction can be attributed to a lack of commitment and will be remembered as one of the United States’ darkest hours. The conclusion was captured best in a response to Hayes inauguration by the Chairman of Kansas’ Republican state committee who stated “I think the policy of the new administration will be to conciliate the white men of the South. Carpetbaggers to the rear, and [blacks] take care of yourselves.”⁴⁷ Less than two months later, federal troops were pulled out of the South and it was almost as if the Civil War and reconstruction had never happened.

⁴⁶ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 535. Carpetbaggers was the name for Northerners who re-located to the South for the intent of taking advantage of postwar conditions. Scalawags were native Southern whites who supported Republicans and the reconstruction efforts in the South.

⁴⁷ Foner, *Reconstruction*, 581.

Chapter 2

Japan

As Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, I announce it my firm purpose, in the tradition of the countries I represent, to proceed in the discharge of my responsibilities with justice and tolerance, while taking all necessary dispositions to insure that the terms of surrender are fully, promptly, and faithfully complied with.¹

General Douglas MacArthur

[The Americans] encountered a populace sick of war, contemptuous of the militarists who had led them to disaster, and all but overwhelmed by the difficulties of their present circumstances in a ruined land. More than anything else, it turned out, the losers wished both to forget the past and to transcend it.²

The consecutive atomic bombing of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on the 6th and 9th of August, 1945 ended World War II. The Germans had already surrendered three months earlier and within a week of dropping the second atomic bomb, the Japanese agreed to the conditions of the Potsdam Declaration. A day later on August 15, 1945 Emperor Hirohito, considered by the majority of his subjects to be a living deity, spoke directly to the Japanese people for the first time ever, announcing over the radio his acceptance of defeat and acknowledging “his own transcendent morality.”³

Officially referred to as the Occupation of Japan, reconstruction did not formally begin until a few weeks later, after the official signing of the terms of surrender on the deck of the battleship *Missouri* on September 2, 1945. In a brief ceremony, General Douglas MacArthur, who had been designated as the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, made a concise, compelling, and transparent speech informing the Japanese public of the plan for US occupation, stating “both victors and vanquished” would be

¹ Douglas MacArthur, “Surrender Ceremony on the U.S.S. Missouri,” speech, aboard the USS Missouri, 2 September, 1945.

² John Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1999), 24.

³ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 36-37.

required to work together to rebuild and “emerge out of the blood and carnage of the past.”⁴ MacArthur’s address was both bold and solemn, demanding change over appeasement, but also embracing victory with dignified compassion.

The tone and language used by both Emperor Hirohito and General MacArthur proved to be enormously influential and prophetic, establishing a unified voice and effort to accomplish reconstruction in Japan. In only six years and eight months, the policy, strategy, and organization utilized enabled virtually seamless reconstruction and transition. The subsequent relationship and outcome was historically unprecedented, forming a new blueprint for successful, military-led reconstruction.



Figure 3: Japanese Surrender Ceremony, 2 September, 1945

Source: TotallyHistory.com, 2012, “American planes over the USS Missouri celebrating the signing,” <http://totallyhistory.com/japanese-instrument-of-surrender/>.

⁴ MacArthur, *Surrender Ceremony*.

Unified Policy

Policy during the reconstruction of Japan was simple and concise. By the time General MacArthur had to execute operations in September 1945, objectives had already been agreed upon by the President, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the State Department. A process of in depth committee and staffing action enabled the solidification of a single, coherent policy. All parties were duly motivated by the severity of loss and destruction incurred from years of fighting, as well as an appreciation of the grave importance of avoiding another war. The shared sense of purpose driving policy was summed up by MacArthur after the Japanese surrender ceremony, stating “We have had our last chance. If we do not devise some greater and more equitable system, Armageddon will be at our door.”⁵

By early 1945 “Japanese defeat was inevitable” and troops were already being mobilized in Europe for deployment to the Pacific in anticipation of an invasion of the home islands.⁶ After the death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Vice President Harry S. Truman inherited not only victory over Nazi Germany, but also possibly the most difficult decision of any Presidency. Tens of thousands of both Japanese and American troops had perished in Okinawa in what was considered by many to be the among the worst battles of the war.⁷ When the theory of the atomic bomb became reality after a successful test at Los Alamos on July 16, 1945, Truman chose to use atomic bombs believing them to be the fastest and ultimately least deadly path to peace and unconditional surrender.⁸

Policy planning for post-war Japan reconstruction had already begun more than three years prior. In February 1942, Secretary of State Cordell Hull headed the Advisory Committee on Postwar Foreign Policy, introducing the concept of unconditional surrender for the first time.⁹ The State Department molded and crafted several

⁵ Allan R. Millet and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 260.

⁶ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 484.

⁷ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 484.

⁸ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 485.

⁹ Marlene Mayo, “American Wartime Planning for Occupied Japan: The Role of Experts,” in *Americans as Proconsuls: United States Military Government in Germany and Japan, 1944-1952*, ed. Robert Wolfe. (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984), 7.

documents over the next two years to define US post-war goals in Japan, culminating in 1944 with a document entitled “The Post-War Objectives of the United States in Regard to Japan,” which outlined a policy of “retribution” for Japanese military aggression and installing an occupying force until such time Japan was prepared to properly discharge “its responsibilities in the family of peaceful nations.”¹⁰ Fewer allied barriers and two years of staffing documents honed the diplomatic intent and messaging for Japanese reconstruction policy and distinctly separated it from that of efforts in Europe.

More specific policy planning for Japan began in late 1944 with the creation of the State-War-Navy Coordination Committee, which incorporated the Departments of War and the Navy into the process.¹¹ A subcommittee was established explicitly for the purpose of generating a “comprehensive statement of US postwar policy for Japan” including guidance to “the military commander who would lead Allied occupation.”¹² The end product produced just six months later in June 1945 was the “Summary of United States Post-Defeat Policy Relating to Japan,” which provided the foundation for the Potsdam Declaration adopted the following month by the Allied leaders in Berlin.¹³

Before reconstruction even began then, three years of a unified US planning effort enabled clear and decisive guidance to be available for implementation in the form of the Potsdam Declaration. “By no means a tame document,” the Declaration was both reassuring and assertive.¹⁴ Much like MacArthur’s surrender speech, it laid out a concise, transparent, and fair plan for occupation and reconstruction assuring “the Japanese they would not be enslaved or destroyed as a nation, although they would lose their empire.”¹⁵ The language of the Declaration became the centerpiece and guiding directive for all future reconstruction planning documents, stating in no uncertain terms “stern justice” would be applied to those who had “deceived and misled the people of Japan into

¹⁰ United States Department of State. *Japan: The Post-War Objectives of the United States in regard to Japan* (PWC108b, CAC116b), May 4, 1944 from the Japanese national Diet Library, “Birth of the Constitution of Japan,” available from www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/shiryo/01/005/005_001r.html.

¹¹ Mayo, *American Wartime Planning*, 4. The State-War-Navy Coordination Committee was State Department led.

¹² Ray Moore and Donald L. Robinson, *Partners for Democracy: Crafting the New Japanese State under MacArthur* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002), 25.

¹³ Eiji Takemae. *Inside GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy* (New York, NY: Continuum, 2002), 217.

¹⁴ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 74.

¹⁵ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 74.

embarking on world conquest” and providing occupational termination criteria based on Japanese establishment of a “peacefully inclined and responsible government.”¹⁶ The idea of freedom to express one’s views was a foreign concept to most of the Emperor’s subjects and the Potsdam Declaration was purposefully ambiguous to allow the Japanese people the “right to choose their own form of government.”¹⁷ Considering at the time two-thirds of the American public polled called for the Emperor to be arrested or executed, all references pertaining to his retaining authority were omitted from the Declaration by unanimous consent of the President, Secretary of State, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.¹⁸ Although rejected initially by the Japanese government, this modification in policy allowed General MacArthur much more flexibility and control in developing strategy as he took command of occupational forces only a few short months later. The adoption of the Potsdam Declaration combined with the complete and unconditional surrender of the Japanese steered reconstruction towards a policy of not only “democratization,” but also a larger attempt to “reeducate” and “change the psychology of the Japanese people.”¹⁹

In late August 1944, MacArthur received drafts of two key reconstruction policy documents.²⁰ The first document was a State-War-Navy Coordination Committee drafted and presidentially endorsed amendment to the Potsdam Declaration called the “United States Initial Post-Surrender Policy for Japan.” The document cemented new US policy to retain an “intact Japanese administration” to assist in the implementation of reconstruction objectives.²¹ A paragraph within the “Allied Authority” section titled “Relationship to Japanese Government,” clearly outlined the expectation for MacArthur to “exercise his authority through Japanese governmental machinery and agencies, including the Emperor,” in order to attain US objectives “with a minimum commitment of its forces and resources.”²² The second document was Joint Chiefs of Staff classified military guidance called the “Basic Directive for Post-Surrender Military Government in

¹⁶ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 74.

¹⁷ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 75.

¹⁸ Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 217.

¹⁹ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 75.

²⁰ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 73.

²¹ Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 226.

²² State-War-Navy Coordination Committee, *United States Initial Post-Surrender Policy for Japan*, September 6, 1945, available from <http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/shiryo/01/022/022tx.html>.

Japan Proper,” commonly referred to as just the Directive. Whereas both documents were reiterative in policy guidance, the Directive delineated fifty specific objectives and tasks the US military were required to execute in order to achieve policy goals. The Joint Chiefs of Staff gave broad flexibility in regards to execution, giving MacArthur “the power to take any steps deemed advisable or proper” by him, but made it clear he was not to “establish direct military government” except as a last resort and could not “remove the Emperor” without “prior consultation” with the Joint Chiefs of Staff.²³ While the Post-Surrender Policy was made public a few weeks after the surrender ceremony, the Directive remained classified until a few years later in 1948.

Policy makers in Washington had drafted “three basic documents that established initial objectives” for the reconstruction of Japan, consolidating authority and leaving little doubt about “the American monopoly on policy and power.”²⁴ Policy remained largely unchanged over the next five years until the outbreak of the Korean War and even then only vary minimally. The process to develop US policy was unified and consistent, resulting in singular, clear, and concise guidance. It was now up to MacArthur to determine strategy best suited to execute policy using minimal US resources in conjunction with a defeated, exhausted, and disillusioned Japanese people.

Focused Strategy

In the span of only a month, two atomic explosions killed 135,000 people, the Japanese government had surrendered, and US occupation forces were facing “an impoverished state with 13 million bombed-out refugees.”²⁵ The Japanese people were waking up from a generationally inherited imperial rule that had enabled a society bound by blind faith in a godlike Emperor to invoke an unwavering belief in national supremacy through militarism. General MacArthur and his staff had their work cut out for them, but used strategy implementation effectively to the elaborate and well thought out Joint Chiefs of Staff Directive. The document became “regarded as their basic guide,” with staff literally planning and executing most of the objectives and tasks word for word from

²³ Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Basic Directive for Post-Surrender Military Government in Japan Proper* (JCS 1380/15), November 3, 1945, available from <http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/shiryo/01/036/036tx.html>.

²⁴ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 73.

²⁵ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 485-486.

the Directive.²⁶ MacArthur stepped into the role of “surrogate emperor,”²⁷ attempting to balance US policy with Japanese culture by implementing strategy simultaneously to dismantle militarism, democratize institutions, and maintain some semblance of acceptable Japanese cultural tradition in order to ease the transition.

Policy made it clear “disarmament and demilitarization were not merely to be ‘complete’ but also ‘permanent’.”²⁸ The concept of dismantling militarism was based on eradicating the very “roots” of the culture that had bred it. MacArthur and his staff quite literally adopted the “rooting out” mantra, boasting a metaphoric strategy of getting “rid of the disease” within the tree of Japan by taking the militaristic “root and branches off.”²⁹ The logic of the strategy was that democratic reform would cause a societal shift away from the “will to war” and towards a “will of the people” to peacefully coexist.³⁰ Though idealistic, imposing reform seemed to be the fastest and most effective strategy to achieving “the eventual establishment of a peaceful and responsible government.”³¹ The strategy to dismantle militarism with democratic ideology was also accompanied by an obvious, massive, and somewhat dubious “demilitarization” program. The majority of the Japanese military arsenal was destroyed outright, in many cases by “spewing napalm jelly and flames” on vehicles or blowtorching, cutting apart, and discarding pieces of equipment into Tokyo Bay.³² In most cases Japanese military personnel were not held as prisoners of war, but simply disarmed and demobilized. Those accused as war criminals who were part of the militaristic Japanese apparatus were tried and “held accountable for committing ‘crimes against peace’ and ‘crimes against humanity’,” unprecedented in international law, but necessary to establishing swift justice and discipline.³³ Dismantling militarism physically was the easy part, but to completely remove it ideologically, MacArthur was starting from scratch, attempting to promote democracy and a new form

²⁶ Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 228.

²⁷ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 510.

²⁸ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 74.

²⁹ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 77.

³⁰ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 77.

³¹ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 76.

³² Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 78-79.

³³ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 80.

of government for a Japanese people who had never known freedom or “been entirely free to express their views” previously.³⁴

MacArthur was faced with a dilemma in imposing “democratization.” He had to legitimize “radical top-down reform” and “revolution from above” that directly contradicted any normal notion of a “genuinely democratic revolution” within an indigenous society.³⁵ The key to his strategy was enabling the Japanese people “to truly express their will freely,” which required dismantling the “authoritarian structure” associated with the former imperialistic and militaristic government.³⁶ In October 1945, he executed two orders based on specific tasks in the Directive calling for the dissolution of “The Peace Preservation Law” and the “liberalization of the constitution.”³⁷ “Suddenly, abstract statements about promoting democracy had become exceedingly specific,” mandating the immediate termination of all institutional “thought police,” restrictions on free speech and assembly, incarceration and detainment of political prisoners, and prohibition of women’s suffrage.³⁸ Almost every action taken to deconstruct the imperial authoritarian regime was spelled out in excruciating detail within the Directive. The Joint Chiefs of Staff had crafted a near perfect blueprint for reconstruction in Japan.

The genuine US commitment and actions “ultimately impressed Japanese at all levels” within the first months of occupation, helping to achieve the desired policy goal of cooperation as equal partners, rather than an unconditionally occupied rival.”³⁹ Strategy for reform was initiated on political, economic, and educational fronts simultaneously in accordance with the Directive, resulting in dramatic and surprisingly quick success. Within six months of beginning reconstruction, Japan’s parliament, the Diet, passed sweeping legislation to abolish economic and financial monopolies, the “government-sponsored cult of state Shinto, and the ability of much of the imperial government “old guard” to hold public office.”⁴⁰ However, the “single most brazen and

³⁴ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 75.

³⁵ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 80-81.

³⁶ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 77.

³⁷ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 81.

³⁸ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 81.

³⁹ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 81. Up to this point Japanese National press had reported that the people were “not equal” to the occupation authorities, breeding discontent.

⁴⁰ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 82.

enduring act of the democratic revolution” was not something previously authored by any US policy document, instead stemming from a “spur of the moment” action by MacArthur.⁴¹

Deeming the existing Japanese Constitution to be “incompatible with the healthy development of responsible democratic government,” MacArthur had conveyed to the Diet in October 1945 “that constitutional revision was expected.”⁴² After months of frustrating deliberation, MacArthur “concluded that the [Japanese] government was incapable of proposing revisions that would meet the Potsdam requirements” and in February 1946 used his supreme authority to discharge one of his most controversial reconstruction orders, entrusting his staff “with the historically significant task of drafting a new Constitution for the Japanese people.”⁴³ After his staff conducted a weeklong “Constitutional Convention,” a draft charter was sent to the Diet and after a little over a year of “extensive public and parliamentary discussion,” a new Constitution of Japan was enacted May 3, 1947.⁴⁴ The new Constitution “retained the imperial system, but simultaneously established the principle of popular sovereignty and guaranteed a broad range of human rights,” transforming Japanese subjects into citizens.⁴⁵ It was the “crown jewel of the reformist agenda” and what MacArthur himself dubbed to be “probably the single most important accomplishment of the occupation.”⁴⁶ The document wed the basic ideals of “democratization” to “demilitarization” by expressly renouncing war “as a means of resolving international disputes,” formally committing Japan “to a Pacifist course,” and winning a major victory in defeating the ideology of ultranationalist militarism.⁴⁷

In addition to introducing a new constitution, MacArthur also had to make another controversial decision as Supreme Commander in order to ensure the maintenance of culture required for smooth implementation of his strategy. Perhaps MacArthur’s biggest hurdle in accomplishing US policy goals in Japanese reconstruction

⁴¹ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 346.

⁴² Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 346-348.

⁴³ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 360.

⁴⁴ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 82.

⁴⁵ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 82.

⁴⁶ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 82, 346.

⁴⁷ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 83.

was maintaining cultural transition. The Emperor and elites represented “the Old Guard” of a “feudalistic” system which had provided unparalleled power to the imperial government.⁴⁸ To them, “the overriding tasks of the post-defeat period were to thwart social upheaval, preserve unchanged the emperor-centered “national polity,” and put the country back on its feet economically.”⁴⁹ They saw the war as an abnormality, a glitch “brought about by irresponsible and conspiratorial elements within the imperial military” and that no major reforms were necessary, but rather just a return to the “status quo ante of the late 1920s, before the militants took over.”⁵⁰ In short, the Emperor and elites didn’t see any flaws with the imperialistic system which had rewarded them so generously and hence, saw no need for any significant change. The former imperial subjects turned citizens were still bewildered by the speed and volume of radical changes that had occurred during reconstruction. Women voted for the first time in the 1946 elections and new blood was entering into Japanese government promoting change.⁵¹ Japanese citizens were split on feelings about the Emperor and how much responsibility he and the elites bore for the war, with speculation that “popular support for abdication” probably ran around fifty percent.⁵² Many in Washington and within Allied circles called for an indictment of Hirohito, but MacArthur believed should the Emperor be tried for war crimes or even abdicate, “Japan would be plunged into chaos and a significantly larger occupation force would be required.”⁵³ Regardless of the reality of the Emperor’s involvement with war, MacArthur and his staff conducted a campaign of inaction, never conducting “a serious investigation of the Emperor’s involvement in promoting aggression,” and absolving him of any responsibility “that might make him culpable to indictment as a war criminal.”⁵⁴ Two years later in 1948, after the judgments of the Tokyo tribunal were rendered, the emperor wrote an “ultra-secret personal message” to MacArthur conveying a “renewed resolution” of his intention to “work together with his people for the reconstruction of Japan and the promotion of world peace.”⁵⁵ The not so

⁴⁸ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 83-84.

⁴⁹ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 83.

⁵⁰ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 84.

⁵¹ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 82-83.

⁵² Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 327.

⁵³ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 324.

⁵⁴ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 325-326.

⁵⁵ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 329.

subtle expression of gratitude was reassuring to MacArthur as both a pledge of support and validation of his decision to protect and keep the Emperor in power to maintain not only cultural stability, but hasten a smooth transition to democracy.



Figure 4: MacArthur and Hirohito, September 27, 1945

Source: Wordpress.com, 2012, “When MacArthur Met the Emperor,”
<https://iconicphotos.wordpress.com/2012/09/28/when-macarthur-met-the-emperor/>.

MacArthur was able to do “what no other occupation force had done before,” in remaking the very fabric of a defeated nation.⁵⁶ Appeasement to any form of the previous imperial or militaristic government was not an option. Given the complacency of the elites with the old system, MacArthur had credible belief that “had men of influence from the emperor on down been left to their own devices, they would never have dreamed of initiating anything remotely approximating such drastic reforms”⁵⁷ His

⁵⁶ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 78.

⁵⁷ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 83.

staff was able to relate objectives and tasks from the Joint Chiefs of Staff Directive to strategy. MacArthur stuck relatively strictly to policy guidance and only intervened where necessary as the Supreme Commander, most decisively and controversially when intervening in the creation of the new Constitution of Japan and absolving the Emperor of responsibility for war.⁵⁸ However, MacArthur may never have been able to conduct his strategy effectively without the efficient internal organization of his General Headquarters staff.

Organizational Harmony

The organization of the US reconstruction apparatus began with the creation of the General Headquarters during planning for the invasion of Japan. Originally, it encompassed command of a joint invasion force, but in June 1945 MacArthur directed his staff to draft an occupation plan for post-invasion or even post-capitulation reconstruction.⁵⁹ Codenamed Operation BLACKLIST, the plan required an occupation force of approximately 500,000 and was approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in July 1945. MacArthur had to tailor the force to fit the domestic and political needs of the greater mission. In order to do this, he created and devoted specialized organizations within the staff such as the “Military Government Section,” the “Economic and Scientific Section,” and the “Civil Information and Education Section” to provide expertise and oversight for the civil administration of Japan and other untraditional military missions required by reconstruction.⁶⁰ All of these sections aligned under the General Headquarters and led by MacArthur, allowing for unity of effort and a single decision authority.

The General Headquarters staff was 2000 strong, the majority of which were civilian, by a ratio of “about four to one.”⁶¹ Of that, “more than 40 percent of the headquarters staff” was comprised of local citizens to assist with translation and integration with the Japanese institutions US policy had deemed remain intact and

⁵⁸ State-War-Navy Coordination Committee, *Initial Post-Surrender Policy*.

⁵⁹ Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 39.

⁶⁰ Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 48, 66.

⁶¹ Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, xxviii.

execute the majority of reconstruction tasks.⁶² Additionally, MacArthur directed the Japanese Foreign Ministry to establish and co-locate “Central Liaison Offices” at both the General and Regional Headquarters in order “to serve as the official channel of communication” between US and Japanese agencies. As a feedback mechanism, “Military Governance Teams” were installed to interact directly with local administration within each region of Japan. Though small in size, ranging anywhere from 25-83 personnel per team, they were able to imbed with locals on the ground and provide accurate progress reports to the General Headquarters.⁶³

MacArthur had successfully engineered one of the most efficient and effective reconstruction organizations in history. With minimal military manning, General Headquarters was able to leverage and consolidate Japanese civilians and institutions into one fluid structure. Control was based on centralized command with MacArthur as the sole decision-making authority and decentralized execution with Japanese and US forces working together at the local level to implement reconstruction objectives and tasks. The unique, integrated organizational structure coupled with “the truly ambitious nature” of American intentions enabled unprecedented synergy and unity to occur with the Japanese.⁶⁴ Reconstruction was not a traditional military role or mission, but by organizing efficiently US forces were able to overcome resource and cultural shortcomings.

An Untraditional Military Role with Legs

MacArthur had unprecedented power as the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. This authority combined with almost complete autonomy, permitted the US military to enact and execute strategy with extreme flexibility. As long as MacArthur consulted with the President, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the State Department prior to any significant actions as mandated by policy, there was little external interference with reconstruction operations. MacArthur “had not only the normal executive authorities,”

⁶² Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, xxix.

⁶³ Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, *Reports of General MacArthur. Vol. 1 Supplement: MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase* (Washington, D.D., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1994), 203.

⁶⁴ Dower, 81.

but also the “legislative authority” to govern unilaterally and issue directives by fiat.⁶⁵ The power the military yielded during occupation gave them the opportunity to not only make mistakes, but to expand and adapt to opportunities as they arose.

However, even with almost limitless authority, the US military was ill-equipped and untrained to conduct civil administration operations, especially on a scale the size of post-war Japan. While demobilization, demilitarization, security, and stability operations were missions well within the conventional military role, MacArthur and his staff relied heavily upon an enormous level of US civilian and Japanese support. The expertise and size of this support within the General Headquarters staff supplemented what would normally be considered a grossly inadequate capability to execute domestic and political functions. Without such external support to the military, successful Japanese reconstruction was likely to have been much more difficult, if not unobtainable and certainly not probable to have had such a large degree of success.

For all intents and purposes, MacArthur and his General Headquarters’ primary role was to provide oversight and enforcement of reform, enabling the Japanese government to become an equal partner and take ownership of their own reconstruction. Authoritative flexibility and civil support furnished the military with the legs required to surmount political obstructions and domestic role inadequacies, allowing focus to remain on accomplishing their primary role.

⁶⁵ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 79.

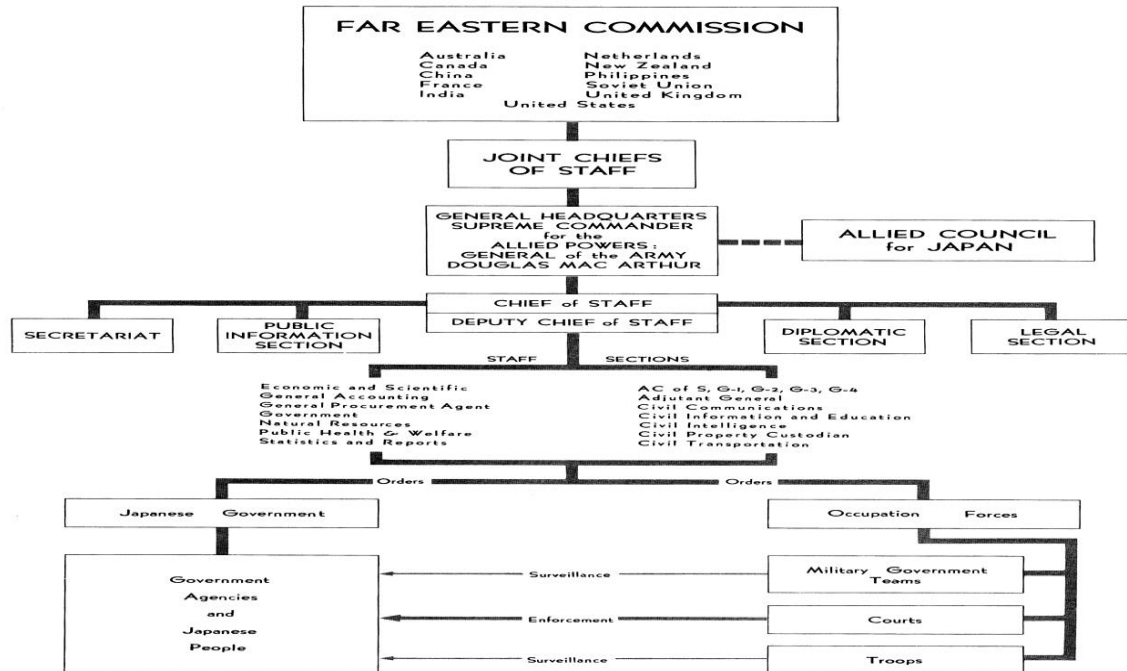


Figure 5: Reconstruction Command Structure, December 1948

Source: history.army.mil, 1994, "Plate No. 25: Machinery of the Occupation of Japan," <http://www.history.army.mil/books/wwii/MacArthur%20Reports/MacArthur%20V1%20Sup/ch3.htm>.



Figure 6: Military Government Regions (7), July 1948

Source: history.army.mil, 1994, "Plate No. 65: Organization of Military Government in Japan," <http://www.history.army.mil/books/wwii/MacArthur%20Reports/MacArthur%20V1%20Sup/ch7.htm#b1>.

Conclusion

Within only a few months in the summer of 1945, the US military had made an abrupt transition from a war-fighting force to one of peaceful reconciliation. American policy had afforded the military complete and total authority to transform Japan back to a peaceful and responsible government by whatever means deemed necessary. As the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, General MacArthur led the effort with a dignified and genuine demonstration of commitment. In less than five years, war in Korea broke out and as a testament to his faith in the success of reconstruction, MacArthur sent all four divisions of US occupation troops to the new “battlefront without the slightest qualms as to the effect” it would have on peace and stability in the new “serene, orderly, and industrious” nation of Japan.⁶⁶

Yet, it was not simply authority that allowed America to impose a successful “root-and-branch agenda of ‘demilitarization’ and ‘democratization’,” but rather a combination of unified, concise, hands-off policy; focused, ambitious, adaptable strategy; and harmonious, cohesive, efficient organization. When policy, strategy, and organization were aligned in such a fluid manner it enabled the military the flexibility and support required to perform their role, traditional or otherwise.

In the case of Japan, MacArthur and his staff were able to achieve what seemed to be the impossible. “In the immediate wake of defeat, a great many individuals at the highest levels displayed no concern at all for the good of society,” leaving most of the Japanese people in an “atmosphere of flux and uncertainty.”⁶⁷ It was in this darkest hour Americans found themselves facing an “intense, unpredictable, ambiguous, confusing, and electric” cross-cultural moment in which they planted “the ideals of peace and democracy” in hopes that they would take root.⁶⁸ Ultimately, the gamble of prosperity was a decision the Japanese people had to make as “a lived experience and a seized

⁶⁶ Douglas MacArthur, “Old Soldiers Never Die...,” speech, on the floor of Congress, 29 April, 1951.

⁶⁷ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 25-26.

⁶⁸ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 23.

opportunity,” rather than a “borrowed ideology or imposed vision.”⁶⁹ All the United States did was guide and assist them towards a future the majority already desired.



⁶⁹ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 23.

Chapter 3

Iraq

We are pursuing goals with a two-part determination: a commitment to stay and a commitment to leave.¹

- Under Secretary of Defense Douglas Feith

In retrospect, the Iraq reconstruction experience looks like nine one-year programs rather than a nine-year program.²

- Inspector General Stuart Bowen

On May 20, 2003 the US military invaded Iraq and in just over one month of combat operations had deposed Saddam Hussein from power and effectively defeated the Iraqi Army. The following nine years were “the largest relief and reconstruction effort for one country in US history.”³ It was a period defined by a lack of integration between command, planning, and execution. Decisions made behind closed doors often surprised and derailed decisions being made transparently. Instead of agreeing upon a unified policy, strategy, and organization, individual agency leaders tended to work separately in insulated, “stove-piped” non-interagency processes and in some cases actually outright ignored or repelled broader interaction. The lack of integration was punctuated and amplified by the lack of unified guidance.⁴ The lack of integration combined with a disjointed and conflicting command structure made decisions on any single course of action nearly impossible. This continuum of chaos remained throughout the entire reconstruction period, accompanied by a “constant rotation of US personnel” and frequent policy changes preventing any solidarity or unity of effort.⁵

¹ Douglas Feith, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Testimony before the House Committee on International Relations, May 15, 2003.

² Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction report. “*Learning from Iraq: A final report from the special inspector general for Iraq Reconstruction*,” March 2013, 132.

³ Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction report. “*Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*,” February 2009, vii.

⁴ Michael O’Hanlon, “Iraq without a plan,” *Policy Review*, December 2004, 11, available from <http://www.hoover.org/research/iraq-without-plan>.

⁵ *Learning from Iraq*, 132.

In addition to the bureaucratic integration conundrum, Iraq reconstruction faced fundamental resource barriers to success as well. From beginning to end, resources were misallocated. The Department of Defense controlled 87 percent of funding designated for reconstruction through 2008, the majority of which was used to address “security” instead of “post-war rebuilding” priorities.⁶ Logistical and equipment appropriations was also controlled by the Department of Defense, with “no priority given to the essential aspects” necessary to conduct reconstruction operations.⁷ Moreover, US military force disposition ended up being only a third of the half million recommended for reconstruction.⁸ For the first five, most critical years of the occupation of Iraq, the Department of Defense was in control and reconstruction operations were not the priority.

Beyond all that, and quite aside from the lack of interagency cooperation and coordination between the US Departments of State and Defense, National Security Council, and Army Central Command, the organizations responsible for providing the reconstruction program “with strategic oversight and tactical direction” changed three times. Each separate government agency involved with planning “developed successive, differentiated reconstruction strategies,” to respond to a multitude of changes in Iraq policy and environmental conditions.⁹ There were also conflicts in command structure causing additional and unnecessary confusion.¹⁰ Inconsistency in policy, strategy, and organization plagued the reconstruction process and ultimately doomed it to failure. In fact, the only organizational consistency ended up being the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, whose director, Stuart Bowen, remained in place for almost the entire duration from 2004 to 2013. This level of continuity with an relatively independent third party reporting directly to Congress proved to be indispensable in determining the lessons learned from Iraq reconstruction.

⁶ SIGIR, *Learning from Iraq*, 38.

⁷ George Packer, “War after the War,” *The New Yorker*, November 2003, 11, available from <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2003/11/24/war-after-the-war>.

⁸ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 34-35.

⁹ SIGIR, *Learning from Iraq*, 38.

¹⁰ Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, (New York, NY, Simon and Schuster, 2004), 413.

Less than a month after what was believed to be the end of major combat operations in Iraq, President George Bush announced victory to the world from aboard the aircraft carrier *Abraham Lincoln*, stating the mission in Iraq was complete, and echoing the common belief within the White House and Department of Defense asserting a rapid transfer of power to an Iraqi “interim authority”¹¹ and US forces leaving “within months of toppling the regime.”¹² The announcement proved to haunt President Bush through the remainder of his administration as reality revealed he and many others had grossly underestimated the size and scope of reconstruction required for success. The mission had actually only just begun.



Figure 7: Mission Accomplished, 1 May, 2003

Source: usnews.com, 2013, “The Other Symbol of George W. Bush’s Legacy,” <http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/press-past/2013/05/01/the-other-symbol-of-george-w-bushs-legacy>.

¹¹ Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 283.

¹² SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 3.

Fluid Policy

Reconstruction policy changed rapidly before and after the invasion. Planning began in the fall of 2001 immediately following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. Bush ordered the Department of Defense to “revise its plans for deposing Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein” and in turn Defense Secretary Rumsfeld imposed his belief that the United States did “not need to administer the functions of Iraq’s government after major combat operations ceased” into the planning process.¹³ Secretary of State Colin Powell held an opposing view. He cautioned the President that disregarding planning for worst was unwise, referring to Iraq as “a crystal ball” about to be shattered.¹⁴ However, Bush and Rumsfeld did not heed Powell’s advice and shaped pre-invasion policy planning with guidance reflecting their vision of “liberate and leave,” only to change policy after the invasion “to one of occupy and rebuild,” and eventually to one of transitioning to traditional assistance.¹⁵

Planning for Iraq reconstruction should have begun on 29 September 2001. That day Rumsfeld “ordered a review of existing Iraq war plans” and General Tommy Franks, Commanding General of US Army Central Command, re-directed “a small group of key planners” to revise invasion plans.¹⁶ Rumsfeld and other key military leaders planned according to the theme of “liberation rather than occupation,” based on the assumption “the Iraqis would be ready to govern themselves” and proclaimed recent success of similar planning in “Afghanistan should serve as a model for Iraq.”¹⁷ Planning did not begin any integrated effort until the spring of 2002, however with meetings of the National Security Council’s Deputies Committee. Representatives from the “Departments of State and Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the military’s Joint Staff” focused on three possible concepts for post-war reconstruction in Iraq; liberation, military administration, or a civilian transitional authority.¹⁸ Contrary to the Defense Department’s “liberate and leave” Afghanistan comparison, the Department of

¹³ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 3.

¹⁴ Karen DeYoung, *Soldier: The Life of Colin Powell* (New York: Knopf, 2006), 401-403.

¹⁵ SIGIR, *Learning from Iraq*, 132.

¹⁶ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 7.

¹⁷ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 8.

¹⁸ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 7.

State argued “Iraq’s competing ethnic and sectarian groups” may not be so quick to reconcile and believed a US-led transitional civil authority was required to conduct a “multi-year transitional period to build democratic institutions.”¹⁹

The planning process sat idle as “an invasion of Iraq remained in the realm of speculation” for the next six months until the President initiated the national security document entitled “Iraq: Goals, Objectives, strategy” in August of 2002. The document appeared to contradict the “liberate and leave” mentality held by the President himself a year earlier, stating the United States was “prepared to play a sustained role in the reconstruction of post-Saddam Iraq” and even pledging support from the greater international community.²⁰ At the same time, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice “established a National Security Council Executive Steering Group on Iraq” to revitalize interagency planning efforts. However, from that point forward integration deviated greatly, with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Departments of State and Defense all forming independent, “extensive compartmentalization of prewar planning for postwar Iraq.”²¹ Without one organization and decision authority to plan and provide oversight for reconstruction, there was no single, definitive and agreed upon policy leading up to “war a few months away.”²²

By the end of 2002, there was still a lot of uncertainty in regard to reconstruction policy planning. In October, it appeared the Department of Defense was going to establish a “postwar planning office” to prepare for “the civil administration of Iraq,” but the President instructed all agencies not to “engage in highly visible postwar preparations while in the middle of international efforts to defuse the threat posed by Iraq without war.” In essence, reconstruction planning had to remain “invisible” for the sake of diplomacy, creating an environment where there were multiple, separate agencies were planning in parallel, some without knowledge of each other’s existence.²³ It was not until

¹⁹ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 8.

²⁰ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 9.

²¹ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 10.

²² SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 9-12.

²³ Nora Bensahel et al., *After Saddam: Prewar Planning and the Occupation of Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008), 26..

the President directed the creation of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance in January 2003 that a sole agency was made responsible for reconstruction in postwar Iraq, but by that time it was far too late to produce “plans on the full spectrum of issues” which occurred during reconstruction in “postwar Iraq.”²⁴ Additionally, the new agency fell under the Department of Defense, at the request and with concurrence of both the Secretaries of State and Defense. Planning within the Department of Defense was continually trending toward a focus on the invasion itself, with little concern or attention paid to the very real possibility of “sustained” reconstruction operations. So when other agencies attempted to coordinate initially with the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, the Department of Defense marginalized the idea of integration, telling the National Security Council Director he did not “need to worry about the nuts and bolts of basic reconstruction” because it was now [a Defense] operation.²⁵

As the invasion timeline narrowed, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld “pushed General Franks to develop a more flexible plan, one that would rely on few troops,” claiming military planners were using “old think” and were not being “innovative” enough in “light of advances in war-fighting technology and service integration.”²⁶ His assertion and pressure caused Franks to “ultimately recommend to the President that he only send 160,000 combat soldiers” into Iraq.²⁷ With respect to postwar planning, Franks recalled Rumsfeld describing the director of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance as the “senior man in charge of Iraqi occupation and reconstruction,” but with “no staff” and “barely integrated into the military command.” Under such circumstances, the agency’s new director, retired Army Lieutenant General Jay Garner, faced an uphill battle to craft policy within weeks of war.²⁸ At every step of the way Garner faced tension and confusion from competing agencies who had all worked on postwar planning independently.²⁹ In Rumsfeld’s mind reconstruction

²⁴ Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 283.

²⁵ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 34.

²⁶ SIGIR, *Hard lessons*, 34.

²⁷ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 35.

²⁸ Tommy Franks, *American Soldier*, (New York, NY: Reagan Books, 2004), 423.

²⁹ Bensahel et al., *After Saddam*, 63.

resembled “quickly assembled, ad hoc efforts”³⁰ and the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Aid was designed simply to act “as a short-term holding mechanism” in order to facilitate a “rapid shift” and transition to “an interim Iraqi authority.”³¹

The invasion and war was over more quickly than many had anticipated, toppling the Iraqi regime and military in just over a month. In view of the chaotic postwar landscape, the only thing changing rapidly was the policy of “liberate and leave” to “occupy and build.” On 6 May, 2003, just one week after the end of major invasion combat operations and only fifteen days after the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance had arrived in Baghdad, the President announced that former Ambassador Paul Bremer serve as the new Presidential Envoy to Iraq, as well as leading the “Coalition Provisional Authority” General Franks had mentioned “would be responsible for the governance of Iraq” a few weeks earlier.³² Garner, who “never saw the Coalition Provisional Authority coming” was taken by surprise and under Bremer, his newly aligned staff and plans “rapidly and massively” expanded, “superseding the quick transfer to an interim Iraqi authority” the President and Secretary of Defense had envisioned just months earlier.

Although the Coalition Provisional Authority gave the organization for reconstruction a new name, policy stayed relatively unchanged. The agency would be “responsible for temporary governance of Iraq” and “oversee, direct, and coordinate all executive, legislative, and judicial functions necessary to carry out this responsibility, including humanitarian relief and reconstruction and assisting in the formation of an Iraqi interim authority.”³³ The major issue facing policy planning within the organization was that in addition to reporting solely to the Secretary of Defense as Garner had, Bremer also reported directly to the President as his envoy. Due to these “parallel chains of command,” it became difficult to create unity of effort between US Army Central Command and the Coalition Provisional Authority because both Bremer and Franks “reported to the Secretary of Defense through separate channels.”³⁴ Despite initial

³⁰ Learning from Iraq, 37.

³¹ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 64.

³² SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 61-64.

³³ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 70.

³⁴ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 70.

organizational and command structure setbacks, the Coalition Provisional Authority continued forward as the leader of Iraq “occupy and rebuild” policy, but the exponential growth and expansion of reconstruction quickly outpaced and overwhelmed the understaffed agency. For the next year of its existence, resource misallocation, unsynchronized military and civilian personnel rotations, and a severe lack of manning caused both “Iraqi and US government leaders” to become “increasingly impatient with the slow pace of recovery” and prompted an accelerated reconstruction program in order to transfer sovereignty back to Iraq by 30 June, 2004.³⁵

Throughout the spring of 2004, reconstruction efforts “began to suffer as security deteriorated” and because Iraq’s infrastructure and oil revenue had not remained intact as policy planning had forecasted. As a result, US costs increased up to 20 percent.³⁶ The President met his deadline and reassigned responsibility for reconstruction to the Department of State in May, just prior to the Iraqi interim government gaining sovereignty on 29 June, 2004. The US Mission-Iraq, led by US Ambassador John Negroponte, was the last of the three successive organizations to be ordained responsible for reconstruction planning and oversight. With the new organization came a new policy of transitioning to traditional assistance which remained in place through multiple changes in the White House, Departments of State and Defense, and military leadership until the withdrawal of US forces in December, 2011. In addition, command of US Mission-Iraq changed about every year following its inception, introducing five different ambassadors, each with a new agenda.³⁷

Policy planning and implementation in Iraq was fluid. Unclear and inconsistent guidance, coupled with weak or non-existent integration and unity of effort led to multiple, parallel efforts that failed to produce any coherent, unified plan. Numerous changes in leadership, resource misallocation, and security conditions on the ground added to an already extraordinarily difficult task. Ultimately, the President and Secretary of Defense bore the bulk of responsibility for the chaotic planning atmosphere by dictating overlapping command structures, restricting interagency cooperation, and

³⁵ Bensahel et al., *After Saddam*, 165.

³⁶ SIGIR, *Learning from Iraq*, 40-41.

³⁷ SIGIR, *Learning from Iraq*, 41-46.

denying unilateral decision authority and continuity. Had a single reconstruction organization and command structure been implemented in the initial planning stages in the fall of 2001 and advice to commit half a million ground forces been adhered to, US-led coalition forces may have been able to provide enough security and stability to allow a well-planned reconstruction policy to be executed.

Differing Strategy

In addition to poor policy planning and resource misallocation, reconstruction faced competing and changing strategic plans. Over the course of three years, three different organizations with three different leaders attempted to execute three different strategies. Iraq reconstruction strategy was as fluid as policy and just as challenging to implement. Each organization had to respond to changing conditions on the ground, while balancing changes in policy and agency transitions, often losing legitimacy with the local host nation in the process.³⁸ Each leader brought with them a unique skill set, but none had the experience or preparation preferred, perhaps even required, to adequately conduct such a large scale operation. Each strategy reflected not only the organization and leadership, but the changes to conditions in Iraq as well.

From the perspective of Garner, the implementation of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Affairs under his direction was a recognition of his success in leading Operation Provide Comfort in Northern Iraq after the 1991 Gulf War. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld thought the position would be “easier for a military man – one who knew Iraq – to work with US Army Central Command,” as well as with postwar Iraqi leadership.³⁹ However, what Garner foresaw as “a relatively short-term endeavor aimed at ameliorating expected humanitarian crises and potential man-made disasters, such as oil-field fires,”⁴⁰ was in reality “mission impossible” and within 56 days of setting up offices in Washington, US forces were at war.⁴¹ Working with limited time, manpower, and equipment, Garner organized the agency into “three pillars” with the Department of State heading humanitarian assistance and civil administration and the

³⁸ O’Hanlon, *Iraq without a Plan*, 5.

³⁹ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 35-36.

⁴⁰ SIGIR, *Learning from Iraq*, 39.

⁴¹ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 36.

United States Agency for International Development heading reconstruction.⁴² In a briefing to the President a week before combat actions began in Iraq, Garner explained a “tremendous amount of work was still necessary to make the interagency postwar plans operational,” but that he had developed a strategy “focused on the need to fund Iraq’s public servants, police, and army; to rush in international stability forces after Saddam’s fall; and to employ the Iraqi army for reconstruction.” The plan was in synch with the “light de-Ba’athification” and “Iraqi Interim Authority” strategies presented at the same briefing, aiming to keep the Iraqi government intact and transferring power back to the Iraqis at a pace of the Coalition’s choosing.⁴³ The President endorsed the strategy, but Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld relayed doubts, about both the reconstruction strategy and Garner.

Shortly after Garner and his meagerly manned team arrived in Iraq, it was obvious to them conditions on the ground were going to make reconstruction efforts much more difficult. Just two weeks after the fall of Saddam’s regime, “anarchy reigned” and Baghdad was in “utter chaos” when Garner and his team arrived. A lack of internal security from any Iraqi security forces and limited US military forces encouraged looting and caused many government buildings to be destroyed, “hundreds of arms caches across the country” to be compromised, and a “lost opportunity to restore government services quickly” all had long-term strategic consequences. The agency did not just have to restart “public institutions and infrastructure,” now it had to rebuild them.⁴⁴ Amidst settling of all the chaos and just as Garner and the US ambassador were making significant progress toward getting Iraqi buy-in to create an interim government at a meeting set for the end of May, the President, at Rumsfeld’s request, implemented the Coalition Provisional Authority and Paul Bremer. Garner and the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance ceased to exist on 12 May, 2003, just weeks after they had arrived in Iraq.

With Bremer and the Coalition Provisional Authority came a significant change to strategy from transition to an interim authority to US governance “under a unified

⁴² SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 37.

⁴³ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 44.

⁴⁴ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 60.

command.”⁴⁵ Within days of arrival, Bremer issued three directives, two of which effectively dismantled the previous strategy of transitioning authority to an intact Iraqi government. The first directive simply restated the general US policy of achieving “security and stability” and solidified the Coalition Provisional Authority as the new governing body. The second directive “banned certain Ba’ath party members from public service” and the third, and most detrimental directive, completely “dissolved Iraq’s military and other security forces.”⁴⁶ In addition to decimating the ability of turning over “security and stability” duties to any organized Iraqi military or security force, Bremer ignored the United States Agency for International Development strategy as well, bypassing smaller, localized “early capacity-building programs” and choosing several large, expensive, and more time consuming infrastructure projects instead.⁴⁷ Within sixth months of the agency implementation, the same officials who decided to dismantle the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance were now frustrated with the lack of progress and forced an unsustainable acceleration of reconstruction in order to transfer sovereignty back to Iraq in only another six months. Within less than a year, strategy had changed from setting conditions for success to setting conditions for failure.

In conjunction with the official shift of authority back to the Iraqi Interim Government, US strategy shifted as well, transferring responsibility of reconstruction from the Coalition Provisional Authority to US Mission-Iraq and focusing on transitioning to a role of traditional assistance. Momentum had been lost and Ambassador Negroponte found the National Security Presidential Directive had also established other new ad hoc organizations that diffused reconstruction, security, and aid programs that made it more difficult for reconstruction integration and management.⁴⁸ A mounting security crisis caused a shift in funding from nice-to-have sustainment to must-have security and economic development, resulting in a “reconstruction gap” that reduced the number of projects the United States had promised the Iraqi government it would

⁴⁵ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1483, 22 May 2003, available from www.iraqwatch.org/un/Index_SecCounRes.html.

⁴⁶ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 70.

⁴⁷ SIGIR, *Learning from Iraq*, 40.

⁴⁸ SIGIR, *Learning from Iraq*, 41.

complete.⁴⁹ Security problems continued to increase and persist for the next six years, resulting in an Iraqi civil war and a US troop surge to quell the violence, as well as changing the priority of assistance from infrastructure and economic development to security.

During the ensuing years of increasing instability and insecurity, Ambassadors Zalmay Khalilzad, Ryan Crocker, Christopher Hill, and James Jeffrey inherited an ever-more dangerous reconstruction mission in 2005, 2007, 2009, and 2010 respectively, conducting “oversight under fire.”⁵⁰ Khalilzad focused assistance back to the smaller, local level “to extend capacity-building” and “provide jobs and improve the delivery of services,” as the United States Agency for International Aid had originally recommended during prewar planning. Crocker worked with General David Petraeus to implement a “new comprehensive, civilian-military campaign” to integrate civilian and military personnel to staff embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams to accompany the surge of 25,000 US troops sent to reinforce security operations. After the surge successfully stemmed violence, Hill was assigned the “mammoth challenge of preparing for the withdrawal of US troops” after newly elected President Obama announced leaving Iraq by the end of 2011. Jeffrey wrapped up reconstruction efforts, overseeing a fifteen month troop withdrawal after the “US combat mission had formally concluded” and the closure of the last remaining transition office in August 2012.⁵¹

US reconstruction strategy planning and implementation was ultimately thwarted by an aggressive, almost insatiable political appetite for fast results. Impatience and a lack of commitment in Washington resulted in swift strategic and organizational changes that undermined efforts of both civilian and military leaders and staff. An explosive situation could have potentially been defused and certainly mitigated had US reconstruction strategy been fully resourced and supported, to include the sustainment of a single organizational construct and leadership from start to finish. Political interference created unnecessary confusion and instability, hindering the chances of strategic success.

Organizational Chaos

⁴⁹ SIGIR, *Learning from Iraq*, 41.

⁵⁰ SIGIR, *Learning from Iraq*, ix.

⁵¹ SIGIR, *Learning from Iraq*, 41-46.

development. This, in turn, contributed to increased interagency tension and outright hostility. Prior to the origination of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, there were “four postwar planning factions,” one civilian and three military, that due to a lack of any dictated authority and integration guidance, could not decide on a “unified mission plan” and instead could only “de-conflict the separate plans in place where the execution of one would interfere with another.” In attempts to coordinate with other agencies, aides quite literally stumbled onto the discovery of a “large parallel universe of planners and plans” at US Army Central Command whose existence was previously unknown to anyone externally⁵⁵. Leader’s avoidance of determining a unified, detailed postwar policy and organization led to gross inefficiencies in planning and unity of effort that were extremely costly in the post-invasion aftermath.

Initial postwar organization was barely sustainable, with the inability of the Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance to co-locate with the Coalition commander due to no space being set aside for them at the Headquarters, resulting in the scattering of planners among five separate basing sites.⁵⁶ “Ambiguity about lines of authority aggravated the situation” even more, but “instead of appealing to the National Security Council for arbitration,” the Departments of State and Defense had a “war of memos” to try and settle the issue to no avail.⁵⁷ During the ensuing power struggle, there was a “lack of an effective media organization,” which should have been used to attempt to calm the public by communicating “a clear message” using announcements with instructions and curfew times.”⁵⁸ Instead, there was no clear messaging and insufficient US forces on the ground led to widespread lawlessness and looting in newly occupied Iraq, disrupting and eventually diminishing the ability of a the postwar reconstruction strategy to quickly “stabilize” conditions and “transition” authority to an intact government and infrastructure.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 48.

⁵⁶ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 47.

⁵⁷ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 56.

⁵⁸ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 57.

⁵⁹ Senate Foreign Relations Committee, “Future of Iraq,” hearing (S. HRG. 108-43), 11 February 2003, available from www.access.gpo.gov/congress/senate/seante11sh108.html.

The disparate organization in postwar Iraq also led to confusion and inefficiency in executing tactical reconstruction operations on the ground. The lack of planning during prewar became very evident with the disorganization of the Coalition Provisional Authority zones, assigning troops to “target areas that did not have any relevance to political boundaries” further aggravating “the interactions between occupier and occupied.”⁶⁰ Additionally, “frequent movement of units from one zone to the next undermined the incipient personal relationships developing between commanding officers and community leaders.”⁶¹ The adaptation of smaller, localized “capacity-building” Provincial Reconstruction Teams under US Mission-Iraq helped to circumvent some of these issues, but the momentum to build lasting relationships and trust had diminished severely so late in the occupation. Growing security concerns and an unprecedented amount of interagency bureaucracy essentially rendered the postwar organization of reconstruction efforts ineffective for the duration of US occupation.⁶²

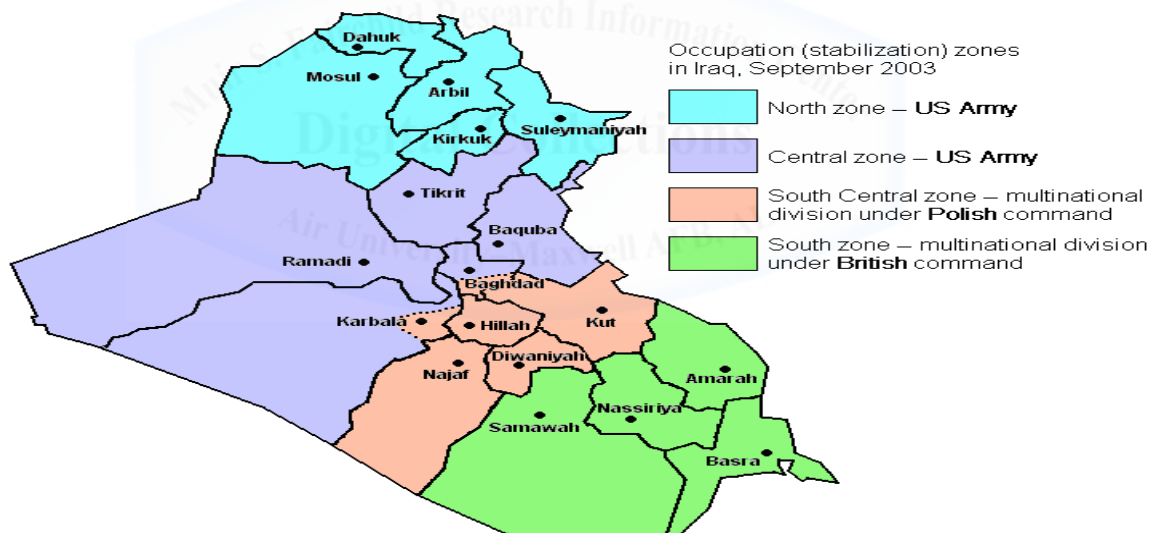


Figure 9: Coalition Provisional Authority Zones, September, 2003

Source: upscavenger.com, 2003, “Coalition Provisional Authority and the Iraq Survey Group,” http://www.upscavenger.com/wiki/iraq_war/#page=wiki.

⁶⁰ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 57.

⁶¹ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 58.

⁶² O’Hanlon, *Iraq without a Plan*, 5.

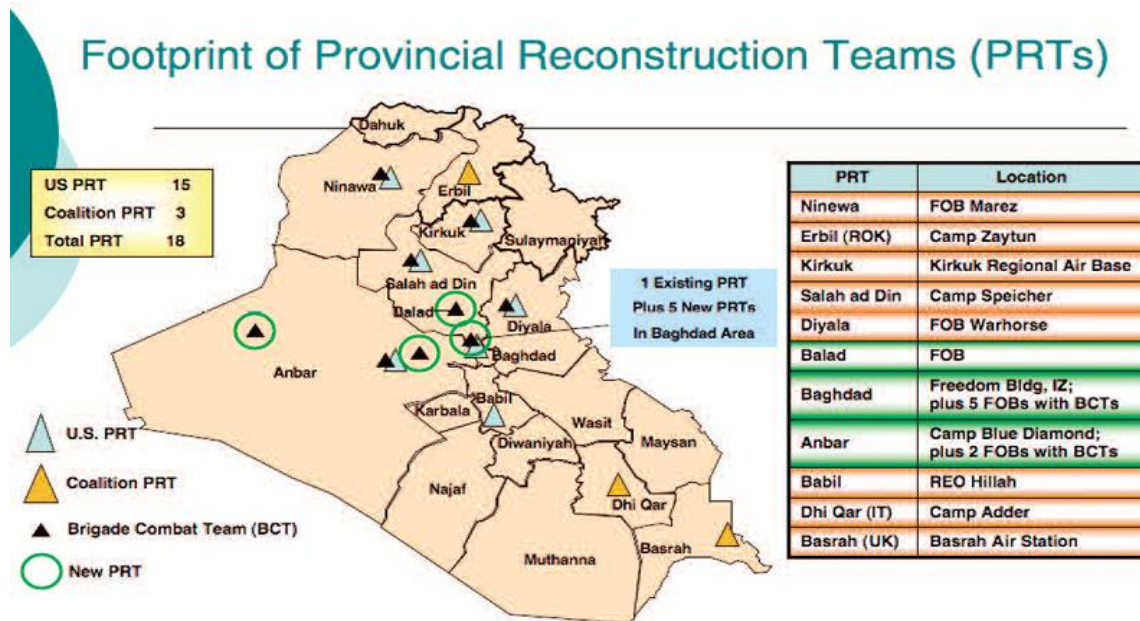


Figure 10: Provincial Reconstruction Team Dispersion, 2007

Source: state.gov, 2003, "Footprint of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs)," <http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/scp/78599.htm>.

An Untraditional Military Role without Legs

From the outset of postwar reconstruction policy planning, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld marginalized the necessity of a large scale occupation force. In a bid to minimize the duration of the occupation, Rumsfeld used flawed logic, equating the size of the force necessary with only the time it took to transition to an interim Iraqi authority and withdraw troops. By reducing the size of the occupation force, the equation focused on the role of the military to invade, liberate, and leave, falsely presuming the time to transfer power and conduct reconstruction would be minimal and assuming excessive risk should any longer, enduring requirements occur. Rumsfeld ignored the Department of State rationale that "the scope of reconstruction would depend upon the amount of damage" that occurred during the invasion.⁶³ Instead of playing it safe and adhering to the advice of military leadership, Rumsfeld denied the US forces the legs it so desperately needed for supporting the untraditional role of reconstruction they found themselves undertaking in the chaos of postwar Iraq.

⁶³ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 20.

Adding fuel to the fire of resource misallocation, Rumsfeld made a dramatic policy shift within a month of the end of major combat operations, administering civil-military governance with the Coalitional Provisional Authority and endorsing Bremer's decision to dissolve all Iraqi military and security forces, fundamentally altering the role of the military to that of "occupy and rebuild." General Franks and Rumsfeld realized advising the cancellation of 50,000 additional combat troops on 21 April, 2003 and not planning properly for a long-term, contingency scenario was a foolish mistake.⁶⁴ Not only did the military have to perform an untraditional role, it and its' Coalition Provisional Authority master were both untrained and under resourced to effectively conduct large-scale reconstruction operations. Arrogance and failure to plan for the worst ended up costing the United States its best, both in blood and treasure.

Conclusion

When policymakers in Washington made expediency their priority, planning for postwar Iraq reconstruction became unnecessarily risky. The willingness to cut corners and rely on faith rather than fact endangered the lives of civilian and military occupation forces on the ground. In the name of expedience, policymakers abdicated the virtue of patience, becoming easily frustrated with any opposition or obstacles to rapid, ad hoc execution. This misguided behavior resulted in frequent changes in policy, strategy, leadership, and organization fostering an environment of uncertainty and confusion. Regardless of the unpredictable conditions in Iraq and internal bureaucratic mishaps, policymakers failed to make sound policy decisions based on factors they could control.

Reconstruction planners at every level, within every agency, and during each phase of operations performed exceptionally. Mistakes happened and lessons were learned, as planners worked within an internally and externally inhospitable environment. With the exception of some politically induced changes, most realized and argued from the beginning "success in Iraq would depend significantly upon synchronizing civilian relief efforts with military combat operations" and that while "institutional differences

⁶⁴ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 61.

made joint planning difficult,” it was possible to overcome bureaucratic formalities and create efficient and reliable civil-military relationships.⁶⁵



⁶⁵ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 20.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

Of the sixteen countries in which the United States attempted to implant institutions of democratic government over the past century, only four – West Germany, Japan, Panama, and Grenada – remained democratic a decade after US forces ended their active involvement in governance.¹

A concept of development that went beyond merely rebuilding what war destroyed. Physical rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure would be one step in a larger democratic transition. Neighborhoods would need to elect their own governing councils to restore civil order. Teachers and civil servants would have to stay on the job. Employment programs, micro-lending, another economic stimuli would be offered alongside programs that fostered reconciliation. This conflict transformation framework had informed international peacekeeping missions in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo.²

American reconstruction efforts following the US Civil War, World War II in Japan, and the Iraq War reveal common factors and trends that coincide with success and failure. In each case, there were specific cultural and conditional aspects that played important roles. Evidence does not discount the relevance of these aspects, but rather supports and validates the importance of considering them in conjunction with the elements of internal factors. The human terrain, geography, and domestic conditions of every conceivable reconstruction operation will differ, but a tailored approach can be applied using these common factors to allow for an increased chance of success.

COMMON FACTORS

The significant common factors among the three case studies act as a playbook of sorts for planners of reconstruction operations. Based on the preponderance of evidence from the case studies, eight factors emerge as a compilation of considerations that seem

¹ Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction report. “*Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*,” February 2009, 14.

² SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 20.

to have influenced the outcomes in all cases in some way. Each factor is linked to having some positive or negative impact on success or failure. In addition, the factors may be universally applicable, influencing successful reconstruction planning and execution in the context of any operational environment.

Table 1: Common Factors of Successful Reconstruction

Common Factors	
Policy	Transparency
	Commitment
	Guidance
	Implementation
Strategy	Planning
	Co-Design
Organization	Integration
	Proportionality

Source: Author's Original Work

POLICY

Evidence suggests a link exists between policy and outcomes of reconstruction operations. When policy was transparent and committed, with consistent, unilateral guidance and hands-off implementation, it nurtured sound strategy and a unified effort. Hasty and fluid initial policy in Civil War and Iraq War reconstruction led to attempts to exert rapid change without regard for contingency planning or risk. In both efforts, policy was inconsistent and avoided the upfront commitment necessary to ensure success. In Japan, policy was unified and consistent from the President down to the sole commander of military reconstruction operations. Where resources were lacking, it was not by the choice of policy, but rather a split imposed by simultaneous US reconstruction operations in Europe and Japan. The policy process in Japan serves as a blueprint for success, resulting in unilateral, clear, and concise guidance and transparency.

TRANSPARENCY. Both Civil War and Iraq War reconstruction policies lacked transparency, failing to communicate their intentions to the populous effectively. In the

post-Civil War South, policy planning that assumed rapid transformation of generations-deep values and beliefs failed to take into account the need for clear messaging to minimize and possibly better address the misperception and animosity that was created by the establishment of the Freedman's Bureau, Union League, and Unionist militias.³ Southerners may have had a strong belief in white supremacy, but transparency about Reconstruction efforts prior to implementation may have allowed for a less abrupt, abrasive, and discomfiting integration of reform. In Iraq reconstruction, policy assumed rapid and seamless transition, failing to plan for effective communication of postwar messaging to the populous to counter the chaos that ensued in conjunction with the complete collapse of governance.⁴ In both cases, a lack of transparency may have actually promoted violence and instability, with an insurgency forming in the South and looting and lawlessness occurring in Iraq, resulting in irreconcilable physical and social destruction rather than the peaceful, smooth transition desired.

During Japanese reconstruction, transparency was at the forefront of all policy, beginning with MacArthur's public speech during the surrender ceremony that clearly and concisely relayed the intent and goals of occupation.⁵ MacArthur was also transparent behind closed doors, clearly defining occupation goals for democratization to Emperor Hirohito and the Diet.⁶ Policy that incorporated transparency through strong, clear messaging resulted in forming a relationship of trust, understanding, and openness on both sides of the occupation, allowing for a stable and peaceful environment for reconstruction operations to occur.

COMMITMENT. In addition to lacking transparency, Civil War and Iraq War reconstruction failed to encompass commitment to achieve policy goals and objectives. In the post-Civil War South, policy mandated substantial removal of troops and resources from the occupational force within the first year and refused to supply reinforcements later during Radical Reconstruction efforts. This failure was duplicated in Iraq when

³ Allan R. Millet and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 260.

⁴ SIGIR, *Hard Lessons*, 52.

⁵ Douglas MacArthur, "Surrender Ceremony on the U.S.S. Missouri," speech, aboard the USS Missouri, 2 September, 1945.

⁶ John Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1999), 329.

policy set by Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld denied sending a large enough initial military force to conduct reconstruction in order to expedite transfer of power and troop withdrawal. Both policies also ultimately ceded to popular support and political pressure with a complete withdrawal of forces prior to achieving all desired goals and objectives of reconstruction.

In Japan, policy extolled unwavering commitment throughout the entire duration of reconstruction operations. Policymakers in Washington supported resources for occupation forces and did not set any definitive deadline to achieve goals or withdraw troops. The only time that any forces were removed was when the Korean War began five years into occupation, and only then with the approval and recommendation of MacArthur, who had determined the Japanese government and populous were adequately prepared and the threat of imperial militarism negligible. Ultimately, policy commitment in Japan allowed MacArthur and his staff to confidently execute reconstruction strategy, knowing they had the backing of policymakers with the same resolve.

GUIDANCE. A trifecta of policy failure occurred during both Civil War and Iraq reconstruction. Policy guidance changed frequently in the post-Civil War South, beginning with appeasement in hopes of rapid transformation, to enforcement without resources, and back to appeasement for political gain. In Iraq, policy guidance bore similar resemblance, hoping for a rapid transformation during the “liberate and leave” phase, then attempting enforcement through civilian governance while combating a civil war and insurgency during the “occupy and rebuild phase”, and concluding with politically expedient transfer of authority.

Japanese reconstruction policy guidance was quite the opposite once again, remaining consistent for the entirety of the duration of occupation. Guidance was clear and straightforward, simply stating the goals and objectives of reconstruction and allowing MacArthur to command as he saw fit with minimal interference.

IMPLEMENTATION. A grand-slam of policy failure, both Civil War and Iraq War implementation, serve as examples of the consequences of overbearing policy execution. Implementation of reconstruction in both the Civil War South and Iraq were controlled by policymakers, with little authority or resources provided to commanders.

By the time Radical Reconstruction occurred, policy allowing the implementation of Enforcement Acts and martial law were not supported by policy to supply the resources necessary. In Iraq, new policy was implemented through leadership and organizations, mandating three successive changes within the first three years and five ambassadors during the remainder of reconstruction.

Policy implementation in Japan embraced a very hands-off approach, only requesting MacArthur consult with the President, Secretary of State, and Joint Chiefs of Staff before making any extreme or controversial decisions, such as the removal of the Emperor. As supreme commander, MacArthur was given consistent policy guidance that granted him unprecedented decision-making and implementation authority. The policy proved to be a success, allowing MacArthur and his staff the freedom of action necessary to rapidly adapt to and overcome obstacles during reconstruction in Japan.

STRATEGY

Sound strategy is crucial to enable policy to be implemented successfully. Consistent and concise policy enables subordinate leadership to enact detailed and accurate plans, including improved co-design with the host nation, leading to much more effective execution of reconstruction operations. In the post-Civil War South and Iraq, reconstruction strategy was just as fluid and reactive as policy. In the South, it was strategy without strength, based on hope instead of detailed planning and co-design. In Iraq, much to the same effect, strategy never had the resources to gain the momentum required to build upon initial ad hoc planning and co-design success. In Japan, thorough planning combined with an embedded co-design concept permitted reconstruction strategy to be implemented with tremendous success.

PLANNING. Reconstruction planning in the South was almost non-existent. Strategy was based on a policy of hope that Southerners would simply transform themselves with little or no guidance and enforcement. Policy dictated change through legislation, such as the 15th Amendment and Enforcement Acts, but local Southern government acted with impunity because the plan for enforcement relied on an insufficient number of troops. In addition, planning was severely inhibited by policy that not only denied sufficient resources, but removed them.

Along similar lines, in Iraq there was a rift between planning and resourcing as well. While strategic planning existed in Iraq, it was convoluted by a lack of interagency coordination and organization, as well as a significant shortage of resources. No single, formal organization to conduct planning was established until only months before the pre-set invasion date due to policymakers who preferred secrecy instead of transparency.⁷ The initial, under-resourced, ad-hoc planning that did occur within the Office of Reconstruction was sufficient and was actually showing signs of progress, when policymakers interfered and dismantled reconstruction organization, not once, but twice.

Reconstruction planning in Japan was thoroughly constructed and initiated years in advance. Policy guidance was so concise that the Joint Chiefs of Staff Directive was used almost word-for-word to plan strategic objectives and tasks.⁸ There was no drastic change in policy or resourcing to interfere with planning execution or organization. Additionally, MacArthur's establishment of specialized staff furthered the expertise that could be leveraged, enabling success in areas that would be significantly more challenging, if not impossible without, such as the creation of an initial Japanese constitutional charter.⁹

CO-DESIGN. During Civil War reconstruction, there was no plan for any co-design with Southern leadership, ostracizing many influential leaders and dividing the populous into rival factions instead of unifying the majority. A Republican Presidency and Congress unconditionally imposed Unionist interim governance in the South without any attempt to include other Southern representation. The effects of such gross exclusion from the political and government process encouraged and resulted in the establishment of a firmly entrenched opposition that resorted to violent insurgency in response.

Alternatively, co-design did occur in Iraq, but initial success was abruptly halted with an organizational change installing the Coalition Provisional Authority. Under the new reconstruction organization, Iraq was divided into four zones without regard for political boundaries. Additionally, Provisional Authority teams frequently changed and

⁷ Nora Bensahel et al., *After Saddam: Prewar Planning and the Occupation of Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008), 26.

⁸ Eiji Takemae. *Inside GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy* (New York, NY: Continuum, 2002), 228.

⁹ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 82.

moved, diminishing commanders ability to establish any productive or enduring relationship with the host nation leadership and populous. An effort by the US Mission-Iraq to utilize Provincial Reconstruction Teams during the Surge to facilitate co-design had moderate success, but little effect on creating long-term relationships and reconstruction.

Co-design in Japan was instilled from the top down in every facet of reconstruction operations. MacArthur worked with the Emperor and Diet to establish a transparent and trustworthy relationship, even requesting the Japanese Foreign Ministry to establish and co-locate “Central Liaison Offices” at both the General and Regional Headquarters.¹⁰ The majority, “more than 40 percent”, of the Headquarters staff was comprised of Japanese citizens to help with translation and local and institutional integration.¹¹ At the lowest level, US “Military Government Teams” were co-located with local Japanese administration within each region of Japan.¹² The immediate indoctrination of co-design concepts into planning and execution built the foundation for long-term, reliable relationships with the host nation that significantly contributed to reconstruction success.

ORGANIZATION

For strategy and policy to function properly, an integrated, efficient, and cohesive organization had to exist to support staff efforts for leadership decisions. Those organizations that were fully integrated with interagency and host nation support were better able to communicate and resolve issues, avoiding unnecessary tension or miscommunication. Likewise, organizations that had a size proportional to the scope of the reconstruction operation had significantly better results executing policy and strategy objectives and tasks. Civil War reconstruction was not integrated, with the military, policymakers, and civilians all working separately, an issue which was amplified by a significant disproportion between the size of the occupation force and the populous. During Iraq reconstruction, attempts were made, but full integration never took place,

¹⁰ Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, *Reports of General MacArthur. Vol. 1 Supplement: MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase* (Washington, D.D., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1994), 203.

¹¹ Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, xxix.

¹² Supreme Commander, *Reports of General MacArthur*, 203.

spurring interagency tension caused by ongoing change in policy, leadership, and organization. While the size of the occupation force remained relatively constant until the announcement and planning for withdrawal, it too was greatly disproportionate with respect to host nation population. As for Japan, interagency, as well as civil-military integration was prevalent from beginning to end, a necessity due to a similarly disproportionate number of forces.

INTEGRATION. Civil War reconstruction attempted to integrate at least some reconstruction efforts by aligning responsibility for Freedmen under the military. The military was tasked by Congress to oversee the Freedman's Bureau, as well as "economic, legal, and political affairs of former slaves," but was not supplied with the manpower, expertise, or resources to conduct any meaningful reform, much less provide security.¹³ Even under military governance during Radical Reconstruction, they lacked the capability to enforce or integrate all reconstruction operations. Additionally, there was never any formal agreement or alignment between the Southern mandated Republican governments and the military. Policymakers, civilians, the military all worked towards achieving similar goals, but never integrated efforts.

Iraq reconstruction began with good intentions for integrating planning and execution, but policy dictated otherwise, delaying a decision to implement the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance. This delay caused an initial disjointed planning process, and increased interagency tension that continued to build throughout the prewar and postwar period. The reconstruction organization itself changed its leadership and command structure three times, eventually moving from Department of Defense to Department of State control. Integration of civilian and military efforts occurred on a minimal basis, most notably with the inception of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams under US Mission-Iraq.

In Japan, planners recognized the need to leverage civilian and host nation assets to achieve success during reconstruction operations. The lack of resources due to US commitment to reconstruction in both Europe and Japan acted as a forcing function for integration. The majority of the General Headquarters staff was civilian and composed of

¹³ Millet, *For the Common Defense*, 257.

both US and Japanese citizens. Policymakers mandated and MacArthur concurred that the best approach to reconstruction in Japan would involve integrating the actual intact Japanese institutions into operations. This was achieved by not only having a large Japanese civilian staff coordinating efforts, but also by utilizing the “Central Liaison Offices” and “Military Government Teams,” to facilitate better communication.

PROPORTIONALITY. All three case studies had a disproportionate ratio of reconstruction force size to the host nation population. The proportion of forces remained the same at approximately 460,000 for the duration of Japanese reconstruction, and relatively constant in Iraq at approximately 160,000 until withdrawal operations began in 2008. However, the worst ration and inconsistency occurred during Civil War reconstruction, which began with approximately one million troops the first year, dropped to 38,000 within a year, and finished with about eight thousand by the sixth year. All the ratios were still extremely low with one US force for every 150 Japanese and Iraqis and every 230 Southerners.

Table 2: Comparison of Proportionality

	Duration of Conflict (Appx. Yrs)	Duration of Reconstruction (Appx. Yrs)	Avg. # of Troops (Appx.)	Host Nation Population (Initial)	Ratio (Appx.)	Outcome
Civil War	4	12	38,000	9,000,000	1/230	Failure
Japan	4	7	460,000	70,000,000	1/150	Success
Iraq	< 1	9	160,000	26,000,000	1/160	Failure

Source: Author’s Original Work¹⁴

MILITARY ROLE

While the military conducted the untraditional role of reconstruction during each case, the responsibility and authority that determined how the military conducted those operations drastically varied. During Civil War reconstruction the military did not have the resources to conduct both oversight of the Freedman’s Bureau and security operations. During Iraq reconstruction, the military primarily executed security and

¹⁴ Based on evidence gathered from case studies.

stability operations with minimal interaction with reconstruction until Provincial Reconstruction Teams were temporarily enacted during the Surge. During the occupation of Japan, the military was given near-complete autonomy and authority to execute reconstruction operations. MacArthur was the sole decision authority and the military was responsible for all areas of reconstruction operations.

COMMON TRENDS

Upon review of the three case studies, trends can be determined that suggest guiding principles for future planning of reconstruction operations.

Table 3: Trends of Reconstruction

Common Trends
The Military is Vital to Success
Integration enables Unity of Effort
A Unified Command Structure enables Efficiency

Source: Author's Original Work

THE MILITARY IS VITAL TO SUCCESS

The military was indispensable to the conduct of reconstruction operations. Both prewar and postwar, the military already possessed the self-sufficient apparatus necessary to facilitate major logistical, security, and administrative functions. In every operation, security was the first priority. Without security, stability quickly diminished and reconstruction operations could not be conducted effectively. A strong and sound military acted as the backbone for success, and a weak disjointed one contributed to failure.

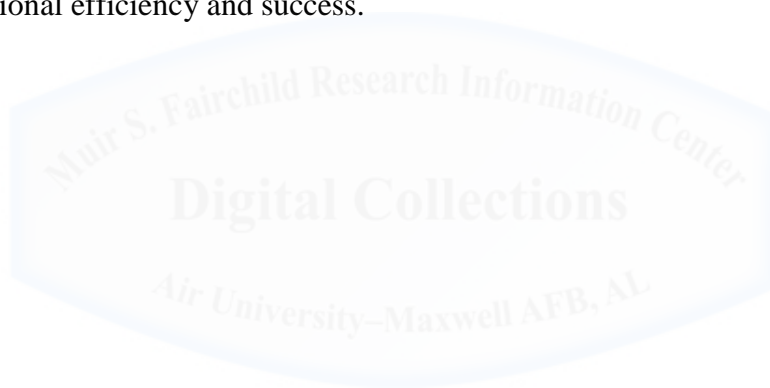
INTEGRATION ENABLES UNITY OF EFFORT

The integration of processes, agencies, and the host nation proved to be essential to successful reconstruction operations. Integration of the processes of policy, strategy, and organization allowed for continuity, consistency, and clarity of planning and execution. Interagency integration consolidated the planning process and avoided

unnecessary tension and stove-piping. Host nation integration improved trust, partnership capacity, and communication with the local populace, helping to establish an enduring, sustainable relationship and enabling a more rapid transition. When integration occurred it enabled unity of effort across the entire spectrum of reconstruction operations, contributing to success.

A UNIFIED COMMAND STRUCTURE ENABLES EFFICIENCY

A unified command structure is invaluable to provide clear, concise, and unilateral decisions and execution. When a single, designated authority existed, organizations were able to conduct coherent planning and execute objectives and tasks without interference or conflicting guidance. Being able to implement coherent policy and strategy and avoiding conflict and miscommunication enabled increased organizational efficiency and success.



Chapter 5

Conclusion

It has long been a concern of mine that the US Government lacks a standing capability in the area of reconstruction and that there is no long-established team of civilians, let alone an experienced joint civilian-military team, to handle the challenges of major post-conflict tasks.²⁰⁰

- Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld

Discipline, moral legitimacy, well-defined and well-articulated objectives, a clear chain of command, tolerance and flexibility in policy formulation and implementation, confidence in the ability of the state to act constructively, the ability to operate abroad free of partisan politics back home, and the existence of a stable, resilient, sophisticated civil society on the receiving end of occupation policies – these political and civic virtues helped make it possible to move decisively during the brief window of a few years when defeated Japan itself was in flux and most receptive to radical change²⁰¹

Given the poor performance of recent US-led reconstruction operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan, it is imperative for the United States to determine and implement a better approach. Reconstruction efforts in the past, be they success or failures, suggest a better approach for US-led reconstruction operations. At the forefront of this imperative within America is the US military, which has played a significant role in every operation. What some have defined as an unconventional, untraditional role for the US military has become a conventional, traditional role in the twenty-first century. While the primary role of the military in Iraq and Afghanistan centered on security and stability operations, lessons from past US-led, whole-of-nation, large-scale reconstruction operations in this thesis indicates the military may be better suited to lead the entire effort. Additionally, the current phased approach to reconstruction operations appears to

²⁰⁰ Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction report. “*Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*,” February 2009, 32.

²⁰¹ John Dower, *Cultures of War: Pearl Harbor/Hiroshima/9-11/Iraq* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton: New Press, 2010), 338.

be inefficient, requiring a new, better approach, incorporating military operations and reconstruction schemes into a single, integrated organization and effort.

Analysis of the three case studies of US-led reconstruction efforts following the American Civil War, World War II Japan, and the Iraq war, leads to two principal conclusions, three implications, and two recommended areas for further research.

Principal Conclusions

Policy, strategy, and organization appear to be key processes for success or failure within reconstruction operations. The three case studies examined emphasize the importance of each process in conducting required operational objectives and tasks. Viewed individually, each case tells a story of challenges faced during a unique set of circumstances and conditions. As a whole, the cases offer a comparison of the individual processes allowing insight into commonalities of reconstruction operations across a great span of time.

As a general observation, success was not achieved if any of the three processes failed. Policy provided the guidance necessary to build strategy. Strategy informed the execution of policy in the most advantageous manner. Organization enabled both policy and strategy to occur efficiently. If one failed, they all failed.

To have successful processes, there are many factors. The eight common factors identified in this thesis may be the most important to success. The eight factors of transparency, commitment, guidance, implementation, planning, co-design, integration, and proportionality represent the consolidated factors within each individual process. Policy is comprised of transparency, commitment, guidance, and implementation; strategy of planning and co-design; and organization of integration and proportionality. Combined, these factors were keys to success and can provide a reconstruction operational planning guide.

Since the case studies focused on US-led, whole-of-nation, large-scale reconstruction operations, the evaluation provided in this thesis may not have as relevant an application to other states and entities. It is with this in mind the two principle conclusions are drawn.

The Military Role

The US military executed the outlined processes of policy, strategy, and organization to varying degrees in the three case studies. Reconstruction failed to meet its intended policy goals in both post-Civil War America and Iraq War operations. The only success was found in post-World War II Japan, due to a sound execution of policy, strategy, and organization processes. This case study exemplifies the blue print for conducting successful reconstruction operations. Because of this, the role of the military appears to be of significant importance. When compared to the Civil War and Iraq, the role in Japan was the only instance where near total decision and execution authority rested under military control. Without such a unified and integrated command structure it is likely that success may have been much more challenging to achieve. It is due to this particularly noteworthy military led success in Japan the first principal conclusion of the thesis is made: the military may be best suited to lead US-led reconstruction efforts.

A Better Approach

Of all three case studies, only one had an organization with unity of effort and command. Japan once again prevails as the sole proprietor of success within an organizational construct. Instead of the frequently changing, overlapping, and disjointed organizational structure exhibited during Civil War and Iraq War reconstruction, Japan designated the military as the single, combined organization responsible for all operations. The resultant consistency and coordination enabled the commander to make rapid, unified, and unilateral decisions without fear of misinterpretation or divergence. When compared to the Civil War and Iraq, organization in Japan was the only instance where a single, integrated organization and command structure existed. From this insight the second principal conclusion of the thesis is derived: a better approach to reconstruction operations may exist in the form of a single, integrated organization and command structure.

Future Implications

First, a single, combined organization led by the military will allow rapid mobility and transition for contingency operations. With the military already operating within an established, robust, and dynamic logistical apparatus, the organization is able to provide unprecedented contingency and reconstruction support globally. In addition to having flexibility and adaptability to mission requirements afforded by a unilateral command

structure, the organization also has the unique ability to focus proactive planning on flash points for failed or failing states.

Second, a future policy based on a single, combined organization led by the military is likely to enable more flexibility in contingency planning and efforts within the international community. Having a dedicated organization for reconstruction operations allows an effective pursuit of reconstruction goals.

Third, a single organization provides a chance to address previous reconstruction shortfalls and failures, establishing a precedent for future success. The combination of case proven processes, factors, and trends increases the probability for sustained and enduring success for future US-led reconstruction operations. Additionally, scale and scope could incorporate a wider range of smaller, limited and humanitarian contingencies, expanding capability and incurring more success across the entire spectrum of reconstruction operations.

Recommended for Further Research

The implications for a military led single, combined organization to conduct reconstruction operations entreats the possibility for future research regarding a future design for such an agency and its feasibility for application to combined operations.

The special inspector general for Iraq reconstruction outlined the creation of a “whole of government” stability and reconstruction operations management strategy entitled “The United States Office for Contingency Operations.” (USOCO) The proposed agency claims to “knock down stovepipes” by allowing “Defense, State, and USAID to focus on their core competencies while working closely with USOCO on the post-conflict reconstruction mission.”²⁰² Within the appendix, containing a detailed, draft “bill to establish USOCO,” the proposed supervision calls for the director to report directly to both the Secretary of State and Defense. Further research about this agency is needed to design a single, integrated organization to conduct reconstruction operations as concluded by this thesis.

²⁰² Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction report. “*Learning from Iraq: A final report from the special inspector general for Iraq Reconstruction*,” March 2013, 125.

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